

An afternoon at the Western Qing Tombs is a must for many overseas visitors to Beijing.

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Beijing without hutongs?

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Ti Tai prefers the title 'magician' to shop owner of the Lanti Magic Goods Shop near Chang'an Shopping Centre.

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China to Abide by WTO Rules

As a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), China will regulate its own behavior in accordance with WTO rules, Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao said at a press conference in Beijing yesterday.

After 15 years' arduous negotiations, China is busy preparing in every field for the upcoming entry, he said.

With a good reputation in fulfilling its international obligations, China will align the regulations of its market system to WTO rules, Zhu said.

On the basis of the WTO mutual open market rules, China will strengthen economic and technological cooperation with other WTO members, including developing countries, Zhu said.

He also said China's accession to the WTO is an important strategic decision against the background of economic globalization.

"It's a win-win situation as it will benefit China's economy and socialist modernization and also aid other WTO members," said Zhu. (Xinhua)

Music Stops, Memories Linger

By Zhu Lin

The Fourth Beijing Music Festival will wrap up with a dab of Dvorak Symphony No.9 at the Poly Theatre tonight.

Starting October 15, the festival has seen 29 concerts performed by around 1,500 musicians from 14 countries. The Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, whose conductor Norio Ohga is currently recovering at the Sino-Japanese Friendship Hospital, will tonight perform under the baton of Zhang Guoyong, president of the Shanghai Opera House.

He will replace Ohga for Wagner's Tannhauser Overture. Soprano Cheryl Studer will sing Wagner's arias at the closing ceremony. The orchestra was the last of seven to perform over the 25 days.

The festival this year boasted a wider programme of a higher quality. Conductor Krzysztof Penderecki said it was rare to see so many renowned orchestras assemble in one city in a single month.

"Famous musicians nowadays are looking forward to performing in Beijing," he said.

Established in 1998, Beijing Music Festival is growing to be regarded as an important symbol of the capital city's support for the arts and culture.

Conductor Collapses during City Concert

By Zhang Xiaoxia

The conductor who collapsed with a brain hemorrhage during the middle of an evening music concert is now reported to be in stable condition at the Sino-Japanese Friendship Hospital in Beijing.

Sony chairman Norio Ohga, 71, fainted conducting the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra during the second movement of Tchaikovsky's Symphony No.5 in E minor on Wednesday evening at the Poly Theatre.

A hospital spokesman said Ohga regained consciousness 10 am on Thursday. Ohga, chairman of the Tokyo orchestra, had been invited to conduct by Beijing Music Festival organizers.

The lights came on as festival staff rushed on stage. Dr. Zhao of the Sino-Japanese Friendship Hospital provided on-the-spot emergency treatment and 10 minutes later, an ambulance took Ohga away.

After a 25-minute break, Yu Long, conductor of the Chinese Philharmonic Orchestra, finished out the concert during which many of the Japanese musicians could be seen visibly weeping. Zhang Guoyong, president of the Shanghai Opera House, will replace Ohga for his remaining concert.



Ohga faints 20 minutes after the interval

EDITOR: LIU FENG DESIGNER: PANG LEI

Capital city prepares to celebrate WTO accession

Big Day, Big Changes

Accession to the World Trade Organization brings opportunities, benefits and worries to city leaders, executives and working people



Beijing media are bracing the city and the nation for a new era.

Photo by Qu Liyan

By Shan Jinliang

Maybe the bookshop vendors are happiest of all.

"WTO (World Trade Organization) books lately have been really popular. Sales rose a lot in October," said Miss Fu, a clerk at the Wangfujing Bookstore.

Live broadcasts will begin on CCTV, not to mention the Internet at 11:40 pm tomorrow as China formally enters the World Trade Organization in Doha, capital of Qatar in Middle East.

The 15-year process has seen some negotiators' hair turn from black to gray, quipped Premier Zhu Rongji recently.

But China's first WTO negotiator Long Yongtu said he felt relaxed before flying to Qatar from Capital Airport a few days ago.

"The connotation of the WTO talks is what we have done for the WTO entry," said Long, Vice Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation.

Media snatches opportunities

The Chinese media seemingly never tires of publishing WTO articles, statistics and relevant regulations from related departments. Almost all the main local newspapers including *Beijing Youth Daily*, *Beijing Morning Post* and *Beijing Evening News* have dedicated spe-

cial pages or columns to WTO. Some even plan extra print runs for the occasion.

Mostly these articles take the form of various experts or officials talking about the effects on business, particularly state-owned companies widely acknowledged as more vulnerable and uncompetitive.

Dancing on the street?

Today's moment, they say, symbolizes China's entrance onto the world stage as a major player, and has been compared to the 2008 Olympic decision and China's qualification for the World Cup soccer finals.

Nothing will beat that memorable Olympic night for Wei Hengcong, a customer service representative working for a Beijing IT company.

"I don't feel so excited about WTO as I often feel this will bring pressures onto us. For some Chinese, I think the feeling is more like a young girl getting married," he said.

"People have longed for this for so long but now as the day itself arrives, they feel nervous and even a bit frightened."

No foreigner can understand Chinese people's feelings about this sudden acceptance, believes Xu Peixi, a postgraduate student studying communications at Beijing Broadcasting Institute.

"I feel a little bitter as China has experienced so many frustrations in the WTO talks, with the US and then the European Union in particular."

Analysts say China's entry into WTO will deepen its opening up and reforms in an unprecedented way. Few doubt great challenges still lie ahead and the smarter operators are already up and running.

Business says less, does more

The multinationals have of course responded fastest. Sony has arranged a speech series November 12-16 in the Peking University's Guang Hua School of Management.

Intel launched its Internet structure study recently in five universities, regarded as a direct attempt to tap Chinese intellectual resources for the first time.

"Beijing has 150,000 managers. Many cannot speak good English. They are exactly our business opportunities for English training," said a representative of English Village International, a company promoting idiomatic oral business English training.

The New Oriental School has seen its teaching income increase to more than 90 million yuan. The language training market will be further boosted after China enters WTO, analysts predict.

The Beijing Forum 2001: International Distribution Modernization ended Wednesday. All the city's major employers sent representatives to hear lectures from the leaders of Ito Yokado, Carrefour, Wal-Mart and other multinational companies.

Master's degrees in Business Administration have never exactly been short of students, but competition at Tsinghua University is fiercer than ever.

Annual tuition has been upped from 50,000 to 60,000 yuan, with the international MBA up from 60,000 to 78,000 yuan. Peking University is to raise its MBA course fee from 52,000 yuan to 70,000 yuan, with its part-time MBA annual tuition from 48,000 yuan to 60,000 yuan.

"The influx of MBA is rising with more classes than ever," says Mr Chen, director of the Tsinghua business school. Chen said 2,800 had applied for 400 places in 2001.

While universities adjust courses more towards WTO, students seem optimistic about their future employment. "We will have many positions from foreign-based companies to choose from," said Wang Zhiming, a student of accounting at the Capital University of Economy and Business.

It seems everyone in Beijing longs and prays that Wang will be right.



Photo by Zhang Jizhou

China Establishes WTO-related Departments

By Li Dan

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC) has recently established three departments especially for China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO). The departments are: the Department of WTO Affairs, the China WTO Notification and Enquiry Center, and the Fair Trade Bureau for Import and Export.

The three Departments will begin their work from November 1, a MOFTEC official said on

Wednesday. The Department of WTO Affairs is mainly in charge of regular negotiations within the WTO framework and China's relations with the global trade rule-making body, the official said. The China-WTO Notification Enquiry Center is responsible for deliberation over trade policies. The Fair Trade Bureau for Import and Export works on anti-dumping, anti-subsidy and protective measures, and coordinates China's response to foreign anti-dumping suits.

"With China's WTO entry

imminent, the establishment of the three departments marks China's close attention to the WTO and will help guarantee a balance of China's rights and obligations in the global body's framework," said a MOFTEC official.

The three WTO-related departments are now cooperating, and will officially begin work after entry into WTO, scheduled for November 10. Some legal documents and regulations that are not in line with WTO rules will be abolished.

North Pole to Get First Chinese Research Station

By Wang Yanyan

China's first scientific expedition and research station will be built in Longyearbyen, the administrative capital of Norway's Svalbard archipelago, the China Yilite-Morning Arctic Scientific Expedition and Research Station in the North Pole announced on Wednesday last week.

Gao Dengyi, the team head and a scientist from the Chinese Academy of Sciences said, "This is a milestone for scientific expedition in the North Pole, because we will have our own expedition and research station in such a key area of global influence." Chinese scientists began making expeditions to North Pole areas in the early 1990s, and have organized 10 expedition and research tours up to now.

China Yilite-Morning Arctic Scientific Expedition and Research Station is organized by the China Exploration Association, with 17 team members of scientists and journalists. They arrived at Svalbard on October 19 and began exploring.

Svalbard has become a key area due to the need for long-term scientific research on the climate, environment, resources and life forms in the North Pole area. In return, the exploration station will provide Chinese scientists with a center for research, accommodation and communication for three years.

CAS Launches Coal to Oil Project

By Li Dan

A major scientific research project to transform coal into oil was launched at Chinese academy of Science (CAS) on November 2.

More than 1 billion yuan has been poured into project, which hopes to begin operation within 4 years. The ultimate aim of the project is to build an industrial center capable of functioning on a million-ton scale. The expectation is that China will no longer have to mainly rely on imports for its oil supplies, as in the current situation.

Apart from both being fossil fuels, coal and oil possess a similar gene that mainly consists of hydrocarbon. In other words, the "coal to oil" technique is essentially one of coal liquefaction.

The scientific research project also includes topics such as building railways in frozen areas on the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau, and decoding the genetic code of rice to enhance breeding quality.

Book Series to Give Insight to U.S.

By Shi Xinyu

Contemporary American Series, a book series reviewing the United States of America of the last ten years, has been published by Social Science Documentation Publishing House this November. The series contains ten books each focusing on one subject including politics, economics, military affairs, culture, and religion.

According to Mr. Tao Wenzhao, deputy director of the Institute of American Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the series contains a popular social knowledge series written by specialists in relative fields. It aims at helping more ordinary Chinese people to gain a more complete and objective understanding of the United States, thus promoting more extensive communication between the two countries.

State Planning Commission Cancels Investment Approval Procedure

By Li Dan

The State Development Planning Commission (SDPC) declared on Wednesday it would cancel the examination and approval procedure for investment in five major sectors. This is the first state department to cancel project examination and approvals after the administrative examination and approval reform.

The five sectors are: I. Construction items of basic city infrastructure including water supply, sewage disposal, garbage disposal, gas supply, heating power

supply and city's roads, bridges and tunnels. II. Agriculture, forestry, and water conservancy projects that state investment is not required, including planting, animal husbandry, fishery, sideline product processing; III. Culture, radio, film and television, education, health, physics and large entertainment items set up by the local government or enterprises who raise funds independently. IV. Real estate projects including high-level office buildings, residential areas and hotels. V. Construction for commerce and trade.

China to Set up Defective Products Recalling System

By Shan Jinliang

China is establishing a defective products recalling system and will promulgate the relevant regulations in the coming two or three years, said Yu Xianzhong, the director of Quality Division at the State Bureau of Quality and Technical Supervision, in an international seminar on defective products recently.

The regulation comes after a series of incidents due to defects in products such as the Toshiba notebook computers, Mitsubishi Pajero autos and National mobile phones. Figures show the damages from defective products are

rising dramatically.

A defective product refers to products that have entered the market with defects caused in the design or production processes.

Director Yu said the purpose of establishing the system is to safeguard the interests of consumers and restricting and encourage the producers to keep away all possible defect risks in the processes of designing, producing and selling. It will also prevent the intentional concealment of the defective products and urge them to take early action and minimize damage to consumers.

Trials No Longer to Run Overtime

By Wang Dandan

People's courts at all levels in Beijing will implement a new system to keep trial duration to the regulated time limit, said Wang Zhenqing, deputy director of Beijing Higher People's Court, at a conference on court working procedures in Beijing.

"Rules on Management of Trial Procedure" was published on November 2 by Beijing Higher People's Court, regulating that the case registration department in courts at all levels is responsible for the management of trial procedures. Trial procedures are composed of an initial notice followed by a warning of the trial time limit. These parts consist of case registration, trial preparation, beginning of a trial, conclusion of a

trial, and filing of a case.

At each stage of a trial, the chief justice or an independent judge should enter the daily proceedings into a computer to allow the registration room. All data collected should be reported before the 5th of each month to the director of the court.

When a trial goes on for two-thirds of the time limit, or until five to ten days before the deadline, a notice will be delivered to the relevant department by the registration room. On the 3rd of each month, a warning will be delivered to the director of the court regarding unfinished trials.

The chief justice and independent judges should be responsible for the improvement of trial procedure efficiency.



Photo by Chen Shuyi

Each year, the city plants 3 million square meters of turf in spite of a water shortage.

By Shan Jinliang

Beijing Municipality plans to restrict planting large areas of grass in the future, seeing that the large-scale irrigation of lawns is unrealistic for a city where water is scarce.

The capital will instead give prominence to tree planting, making efforts to build tree-covered squares and boulevards. Apart from some key areas, the city is no longer to plant extensive lawns. The squares, parks, roundabouts, and lawns of over 10,000 square meters with few or no trees will undergo replanting

in due time.

Statistics reveal that lawns cannot match trees in regulating the humidity and temperature of the atmosphere, producing oxygen, blocking noise, and insulating dirt. Furthermore, more than 1 tone of water is required to irrigate 1 square meter of lawn.

Experts explain officials should be blamed for the increasing number of lawns, as lawn planting is relatively easy and thus provides an ideal opportunity for officials' achievements to be clearly exhibited.

Beijing Keen to Use Reykjavik's Experience in Terrestrial Heat

Beijing is seeking to cooperate with the capital of Iceland, Reykjavik, in exploring the heat of the earth's interior.

This announcement was made by Mayor Liu Qi Wednesday when meeting in Beijing with his Icelandic counterpart, Mayor Ingibjorg Solrun Gisladot-

tir. During the meeting, both showed much interest in the use of subterranean heat.

Liu said Beijing would develop into an international metropolis by taking the opportunities afforded by China's upcoming entry into the World Trade Organiza-

tion (WTO) and the hosting of the 2008 Olympic games.

Beijing should learn from the Icelandic capital's successful experience in urban management, Liu said.

The mayor of Reykjavik said she was surprised at the enormous changes in

Beijing and hoped the two capitals would increase cooperation and exchanges in the environmental field.

Olafu Egilsson, Iceland's ambassador to China attended the meeting.

(Xinhua)

Zhongguancun to Honor Entrepreneurs

By Shan Jinliang

Zhongguancun Science Park is planning to pay tribute to 10 outstanding entrepreneurs and 10 founders by engraving their names on a marble wall, according to Ren Ranqi, deputy director of the managing committee of the Park, at a press conference last Saturday.

The selection will be undertaken by the managing committee together with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, universities, financial institutions, research institutes and media within the park, from November 3, and is scheduled to finish at the end of next January.

The candidates can be recommended by enterprises, relevant associations and organizations, as well as being voted by experts and the public.

As to the requirements for the candidates, Ren said the first is to abide by the state laws and regulations. Then comes the size of the enterprise, and outstanding achievements by the candidate. The personal charm, educational and professional quality of the entrepreneurs or founders, as well as their enthusiasm for social benefit and recognition by the public are the final categories.

Ren said the requirements for the founders are relatively low in order to attract venture capital, originality and a strong team. Ren also said the park is to create a cultural atmosphere of "encouraging venture, tolerating failure".

"Without the entrepreneurs and founders of these enterprises, it is impossible to see such a prosperous Zhongguancun with over 9,000 enterprises today," said an official of the committee. "We hope this practice will attract more talent and bring along more entrepreneurs and founders to the park," he said.

Biggest Bankruptcy Case in China's Real Estate

By Li Dan

The creditors of Beijing Yuyuan Garden recently gathered in Beijing's 1st Intermediate People's Court for the first creditor meeting after Yuyuan Garden's estate agent officially declared itself bankrupt three months ago due to mismanagement.

Located near the Olympic Village, the 94 villas of Yuyuan Garden are priced at \$3,000 per square meter because of its advantageous position. The largest case of bankruptcy in real estate in China was the Rose Garden case with total debts of 0.8 billion yuan. However, the present debts of Yuyuan Garden have reached 1.1 billion yuan, without including its 0.9 billion interest.

Different from Rose Garden, the main creditors of Yuyuan Garden are all state-owned enterprises or banks, which means a huge amount of state-owned capital has been wasted. The court is now clearing the account of each creditor and also the estate agent of Yuyuan Garden.

The creditors need to agree on a satisfying solution for all parties. "The final solutions are no more than the following two: one is to auction off the garden as a whole, another is for creditors to establish a new company or look for another financial setup to go on operating, for example, turning the garden into a Grade A villa hotel," said Zhang Yuping, director of Beijing Office of China Huarong Asset Management Corporation.

Some creditors are optimistic about Yuyuan Garden's prospects. An insider who refused to be named believes Yuyuan Garden's golden location near the Olympic Village will ensure the success of any luxury hotel built in the future. He added that the creditors are willing to undertake such a project, or that one creditor could purchase the full operating rights.

Companies Expand Office Space

By Li Dan

Beijing's multinational corporations are expanding office space for China's entry into the WTO.

The Kerry Center, Hanwei Plaza, Canway Building and Jingguang Center report that companies are expanding or preparing to expand their office space.

Cisco Systems, Panasonic, Lucent Technologies, Ersnt & Young Hua Ming have moved their offices in succession to Oriental Plaza.

Toshiba also moved its office to the Towers at Oriental Plaza — near Chang'an Avenue and Wangfujing Commercial Street — from China World Trade Center recently. Cisco Systems has leased five floors at Oriental Plaza, about 15,000 square meters. Ernst & Young Hua Ming, one of the "big five" professional services firms, has signed on for 4,500 square meters.

"We are very optimistic about the business potential in mainland China. We have already seen an increase in business in the past few months," Conway Lee, general manager of Ernst & Young Hua Ming.

"To accommodate these new business activities and to operate the company in tapping emerging opportunities, we are rapidly expanding our operations which includes moving our office into a much bigger space."

Legend to Cut 10% of Staff

By Xiao Rong

Legend Group, one of China's largest PC producers, announced on November 1 it would lay off 10% of its staff this year, arousing great concern throughout the IT industry.

The statement, which was posted on Sina.com, noted that Legend has decided to maintain competitiveness and cut costs by laying off 10% of its staff this fiscal year, and that layoffs will be carried out twice a year instead of the routine 5% annually.

A Legend official said on November 2 that the company would lay off 5% of its staff within the next two weeks and another 5% next March. The total number of layoffs will involve 500 people, representing 10% of its current employees.

Of the current 5% layoffs, each department accounts for different percentages, among which FM365, an internet service company jointly owned by Legend and AOL Time Warner Inc., covers 30% of the total.

The reason FM365 has to cut a higher percentage of its employees is mainly because of the necessary staff adjustments due to its changing business style, according to the Legend statement. While a laid off staff member of FM365 revealed that they were discharged not due to a lack of ability, but rather as an act of sacrifice when Legend was faced with large scale strategic adjustments.

The termination pay, according to the anonymous staff member, was probably the highest in the IT industry, with an extra four-months' pay for those who had been with



One of Legend's many stores in the capital

Photo by Xu Qingqiao

the company for over a year and three-months' pay for those who had served for less than a year. Large amounts of security personnel and psychologists were also invited on the day of the layoff, with each staff member being escorted home.

The Legend statement also said that it makes adjustments to its staff every year and the current job cuts are routine human resources changes.

For other IT companies, however, the event is not surprising in light of the worldwide slump in the information technology market. Despite the overall unfavorable business environment, Legend has still maintained a 50% growth rate in personal computer sales for the first half of this year.

Not long before the announcement of the layoff, together with In-

tel, Legend developed for the first time the conceptual computer. After that, an alliance in the wireless Internet field was made among Legend, Software, Siemens and Ericsson.

NetEase, another once famous IT company in China, is also planning a layoff according to reports. Thus, Legend is not the first nor the last in the new round of layoffs in the IT industry.

Zhang Hongwei — Hovering on the Edge of Telecoms

By Xiao Rong

With the recent decision by the State Council to merge Jitong Telecom, China Netcom and the 10 northern telecom companies of China Telecom into a new China Netcom, Zhang Hongwei, chairman of the Orient Group Inc., has constantly been under the spotlight.

Zhang, one of China's "Top Ten Outstanding Entrepreneurs of private-owned companies", founded Orient Group in northeast China's Helongjiang province in 1978. Over the last 20 years, Zhang has ranked 24th among the top 100 richest persons of the Chinese Mainland in this year's Forbes Fortune list, owning three companies whose stocks have been listed. He is also the largest shareholder of Yalian Bank of America, China Minsheng Banking Corp. Ltd and China Xinhua Life Insurance Inc. and Jinzhou Port Group Co.

Although Zhang has been running a traditional, privately-owned enterprise specializing in construction, trade, harbor development, and property, he has been trying to stick to the policy of "balanced development between property operation and capital working".

"Only when private enterprises entrust their resources and wealth to people capable of performing in the shortest possible time, can they internationalize their capital, transform their assets into negotiable securities," says Zhang.

It was under this strategy that Zhang hoped to stride into the profitable telecom and finance industries with China's upcoming WTO entry. His first move involved a business cooperation between a satellite telecom company of Orient Group and Ji-

tong Telecom Company this March. After studying the commercial style and structure of Jitong and making an investigation of the potential domestic telecom market, Zhang Hongwei has decided to invest in Jitong by means of Jinzhou Port Group Co.

Due to its failure to list on overseas stock markets, and a long-term shortage of operating funds, Jitong was also looking for new powerful state-owned shareholders. As the largest shareholder of Jinzhou Port Group Co., 72% of whose shares are state-owned, Orient Group, although a privately-owned enterprise itself, grasped the opportunity.

On the basis of a registered capital of 2 billion yuan after the share enlargement of Jitong, the share of Jinzhou Port Group Co. will cover 14.72% of Jitong's registered capital.

On July 14, Jinzhou Port Group Co. announced a new plan of covering over 20% of Jitong's share. However, the plan was voted down in 2001's first temporary Jinzhou shareholder convention due to possible policy changes in the telecom industry in September.

The future merger, if it goes ahead, would be unfavorable for Jitong, for it only covers 1% of the new Netcom's capital structure. So even with the planned 20% of Jitong's share, Orient Group would face a cut in capital in Jitong.

Although "Beijing Today" managed to call Zhang Hongwei and asked him to comment on the recent event, he just said, "We will mainly consider the possible change in policy. Only when there is a definite policy beneficial to Orient Group in the long run, will we make a final decision as to whether to increase our shares in Jitong."



Beijing Hualian Lists on Stock Market

By Li Dan

Beijing Hualian Group was officially listed on the stock market on Tuesday. At present, there are altogether four retail enterprises in Beijing that have listed on the stock market, indicating that the city's retail industry is expanding locally and in other cities.

Experts say that Beijing Hualian will issue 50 million A shares in order to raise a fund of 400 million yuan for further development.

Beijing Hualian Group is currently operating in three areas: the Hualian Shopping Mall located in Fuchengmen, Xicheng District, Shijingshan Hualian Supermarket, and other chain stores.

Hualian's next step is to open more stores or supermarkets around the country. The board of directors says, after Hualian's listing on the stock market, the group will have more than 200 giant supermarkets within 5 years (now it has around 30) and that aggregate sales should finally reach 40 billion yuan each year.

Competition in Beijing's retail market is increasing as foreign names like Wal-Mart and Carrefour are expanding and taking more market share. In this way, Hualian's listing on the stock market is of great significance. Now a local retail giant is flexing its muscles to compete with the foreign brands.



Software company Founder cracks down on fakes

Photo by Hu Guangrui

Founder Fights Agent over Fakes

By Xiao Rong

At the symposium of November 1 on protecting national software enterprises, Founder, the world's largest producer of Chinese language electronic publishing systems, once again showed firm resolution in the fight against large scale counterfeiting of its software by its former largest agent Beijing Gaoshu Tianli Technology Co. Ltd.

The formal investigation began earlier this June when Founder learnt about Gaoshu Tianli's nationwide counterfeiting of three of Founder's key softwares. Authorized by Founder and Guolin Notary Organ, two of Founder's staff obtained evidence that Gaoshu Tianli sold its hardware to customers by installing three kinds of counterfeit Founder software. So Founder appealed to Beijing's No.1 Intermediate People's Court in September.

"Almost 80% to 90% of our income comes from the sale of software, but at the same time we have also been suffering from great losses due to nationwide counterfeiting," said Wang Hong, from the sales department of Founder Electronic Company.

However, Gaoshu Tianli denied that it had made counterfeits of Founder's software and attributed the fault to Founder's staff, according to a former news report. But when the "Beijing Today" reporter pressed for further details of the case, Li Wenping, president of Gaoshu Tianli, refused to be interviewed and promised to make a general statement to the media soon.

After collecting the account book and relevant financial files and agreements on September 24, the court has been auditing the case. "We have appealed for 300,000 yuan of economic compensation; this is a very unusual case of counterfeiting advanced professional software. But what we really want is to improve the general consciousness of society to protect the intellectual rights of our national software industry. With the impending entry into WTO, China needs to fight harder against fakes," said Chen Jun from The Legal department of Founder Electronic.

Besides the lawsuit against Gaoshu Tianli, Founder has also made an investigation of the two counterfeit cases with the help of local law enforcement agencies, both of which are part of Founder's "Fight against Fakes", which was launched last year.

"The government is encouraging the use of real computer software: we will firmly support this move as well as insisting on our own unremitting fight against counterfeits," declared Ren Wei-quan, vice-executive officer of Founder.

Educational Industry Offers Opportunities for Investment

By Zhao Hongyi

It is expected that China will open its educational industry to overseas investors after the country's entry to the World Trade Organization (WTO). China will exploit various channels to finance the development of its educational industry over the coming years, including overseas private invest-

ment, the Ministry of Education (MoE) confirmed this week.

According to the service clause in the agreement China reached with WTO and its member countries, in the first three to five years after WTO entry, China must open its educational industry to investment from abroad. It is believed the government will issue bonds

to finance the development of the country's education industry. Furthermore, introducing loans and accepting grants from international organizations, foreign governments and civil individual investors are also being considered.

Mr. Fan Wenyao, deputy director general of the National Center for

Education Development Research under the Ministry of Education (MoE), confirmed the possibility and emphasized that it is an inevitable stage China has to go through. He also admitted that private investment into China's educational industry would bring a breath of fresh air to the industry.

According to statistics, gross

enrollment at China's universities and other higher education institutes was 11 percent in the year 2000. The target of this figure looking ahead to 2010 is 15 percent, which means the number of undergraduates in the country will climb from the current 10 million to 16.5-17 million, hence creating an urgent need for investment.

Road Transportation Industry Bottleneck to Be Eased

By Zhao Hongyi

The road transportation industry, still regarded as a bottleneck in China's economic development, is about to enter a new period of prosperity, according to sources at the National Road Transportation Workshop held earlier last week in Beijing.

This time, infrastructure will not be the only priority. Instead, financing, new management concepts and skills, as well as sophisticated marketing expertise will also come high on the list of priorities.

According to Mr. Hu Xijie, Vice-minister of Communications (MoC) and supervisor of the transportation industry development, the central government intends to build 45 road transportation hubs across the country over the next ten years. Various channels for financing have been under consideration, including government investment, stock holding, bonds issuing and introducing overseas capital.

Another priority will involve reforming management practices, adjusting the traditional concept of state investment towards capital oriented and market targeting practices. At least 50 national and trans-block professional transportation groups will be established based on the current assets available. These groups will be the leading figures in the future road transportation market of the country.

Thirdly, passenger transportation will be operated under market practice, which means governments at various levels will withdraw from any involvement in ventures in the industry.

It is required by the ministry that this transformation be adopted 100 percent in the eastern coastal areas and in some parts in the middle of the country. In the western part, at least 40 percent of the transportation ventures will be operated independently conforming to market standards.

"France-China 2001" to Offer New Opportunities

By Zhao Hongyi

A number of world famous brands like Alcatel, Schneider, Airbus, Citroen, Michelin, Accord, Carrefour and Peugeot, plus more than 100 small and medium sized enterprises from France will display their products at the "France-Chine 2001" large-scale business exhibition to be held on November 20-24. In preparation, the commercial office of the French Embassy in Beijing held a press briefing earlier this month, emphasizing the exhibition slogan "New millennium, new France, new image and new opportunities".

"I want to remind you that France is not only famous for its romance, we are also leading players in hi-tech industries like electronics, information, bio-engineering, nuclear engineering, and new synthesized materials," said Mr. Francois Petit, commercial counselor from the Embassy.

"This time, over 150 ventures from France will present their latest products and technologies to our Chinese counterparts. These ventures represent industries like food processing, bio-engineering, construction and environment, transportation, energy, information, chemicals, and machinery."

So far, France has been the third largest investor and fourth largest trading partner to China within the European Union (EU). By the end of July this year, nearly 800 Sino-French joint ventures have been established in China with a contract investment of \$6.02 billion and actual input of over \$4.8 billion.

According to Mr. Petit, in recent years, bilateral economic and technical cooperation have seen a rapid growth, with an annual increase of over 20 percent.

"I am sure we will have more room to maneuver after China's entry to WTO," smiled Mr. Petit.

Wal-Mart to Open First Store in Beijing

13 domestic companies establish Capital Chain Commercial Corp. to fight against the retail giant

By Shan Jinliang

Wal-Mart, the world's largest retailer from the United States, is planning to open its first store in Beijing's Shijingshan District together with Beijing Zhongshan Weiye Investment Corp. LTD. The contract for renting the site was signed at the closing ceremony of the Beijing Forum 2001: International Distribution Modernization on Wednesday.

The store is scheduled to open for business in late 2002 or early 2003, said Tom McLaughlin, vice-president of Wal-Mart (China) for merchandising, who signed the contract in the afternoon. The Wal-Mart store, with Sam's Club, will be located in Bajiao Eastern Street of Shijingshan District in the west suburbs of the capital, not far from the registering location of Zhongshan Corporation, which

has recently been approved by the Municipal Development Planning Committee.

Wal-Mart is planning to open five stores altogether, including three shopping super centers and two Sam's Clubs with a total business area of 80,000 square meters. The international company is said to have invested \$25 million in all its projects.

With its Asian headquarters in Shenzhen, the world famous retailer has opened 15 stores in China up to date, not including the Beijing one, mostly in the south. Considered as a "wolf" in the retailing business with over 4,000 stores, Wal-Mart pulled in a sales volume of \$19.13 billion in the year 2000. Meanwhile, the total retail sales volume of Beijing in 2000 was only \$1.74 billion.

Shortly after Wal-Mart and Zhongshan joined forces, Wumei

Group and a dozen other companies signed a contract and thus established the Capital Chain Commercial Group. Such a move is considered an important step in combating powerful foreign competitors.

Experts say domestic supermarkets will enjoy a protection period of three years for when China enters WTO. Foreign supermarkets are already preparing for the expected fierce competition. Jean-Luc Chereau, CEO of Carrefour (China), said his company would adopt more flexible tactics and expand its business scale. Akihiko Hanawa, vice-chairman of ItoYakodo said his company would open more stores, with the Asian Village as a prime location.

Meanwhile, Mr. McLaughlin seemed to be very confident about the company's advantage over other foreign competitors.



Photosource: Newsphoto

Foreign Investors Invited to Handle 1.8 Trillion Bad Assets

By Zhao Hongyi

Foreign investors are welcome to purchase non-performing assets in China, with the money they spend in this regard being treated as foreign direct investment, announced Mr. Dai Xianglong, governor of the People's Bank of China, China's central bank, at the "2001 Non-Performing Loans International Forum" held on November 1-2.

Due to historical reasons, China's four state owned commercial banks, namely the Industrial & Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), China Construction Bank (CCB), Bank of China (BOC), and Agricultural Bank of China (ABOC), have accumulated a total of 1.8 trillion yuan of non-performing assets (NPLs), or 26.6 percent of their total loans in local and foreign currencies, which amounted to 6.8 trillion yuan by the end of September, according to Mr. Dai.

In 1999, the Chinese government established four asset management companies in an effort to dissolve the NPLs. The four companies, namely, Huarong, Orient, Great Wall and Cinda, took on the 1.4 trillion yuan bad loans respectively from the four state commercial banks. Since then, 93 billion yuan of NPLs has been dissolved and 37.7 billion has been recovered.

According to Mr. Dai, of the total 1.8 trillion yuan bad loans, 476 billion yuan has been lost, which means this amount of money can no longer be recovered, occupying 7 percent of the total.

At the Forum, foreign investors

were not only welcomed to purchase the NPLs, but also encouraged to exchange their skills and methods of handling bad loans and assets with their Chinese counterparts.

To secure a more efficient and scientific credit system, China plans to sort the loans into five grades according to quality, and gradually decrease the current 26.6 percent ratio of NPLs of the total lending of the four commercial banks.

Meanwhile, more efforts will be made to transform the state-owned commercial banks into state-controlled joint-stock banks aiming at improving the efficiency and updating management practices in the banks.

China's Cinda Asset Management Corp. declared to set up a joint venture with Goldman Sachs Group to help resolve bad assets on its books on Wednesday this week.

Cinda, which is tackling 373 billion yuan in bad loans taken over mainly from the China Construction Bank, had signed a similar pact with German Deutsche Bank AG.

Huarong also claimed at the Forum that it will launch a global open bidding for the purchasing of a total of 20 billion yuan selected items it holds. In 1999, Huarong received more than 400 billion yuan bad loans from ICBC.

To better promote and formulate the disposal of bad assets, the central government has recently promulgated a set of regulations to ensure effective disposal.



Tom McLaughlin, vice-president of Wal-Mart (China), signing the contract with China's Zhongshan Weiye Investment Corp. Ltd. Photo by Chen Shuyi

By Zhao Hongyi

Long dominated by foreign imports, China's PD TV series market was shaken by the introduction of domestically made PD TV sets by Changhong, the country's No. 1 TV producer in July this year. Changhong's competitive price and aggressive action towards imports forced the later to consider moving their production lines to China, increasing their investment in the joint venture already existing in the country and even transferring technology to their Chinese partners.

China's domestic TV market has witnessed fierce price wars during the past several years, which has damaged the whole industry nationwide. A number of foreign producers like Sony, Hitachi, and Panasonic from Japan, Samsung and LG from South Korea used this opportunity to launch their PD series TV sets, a new generation of TV sets with larger screen, higher clearance and more functions, to China's market over the last two years.

Changhong broke the silence by launching its first PD TV set in July this year. The company experienced a rapid sales growth of their PD series TVs since then, which led to a rise in the overall technology level on the domestic market. Changhong jumped above the ferocious price wars, which are believed to have spontaneously ignited several years ago

PD TV Series Stimulate the Market in China

and are still being waged across the lower end of China's technology market.

On the Beijing market, Changhong's 43PDT18, sold at 14,000 yuan per set, is much more competitive than the same products from its foreign competitors like Sony

and Panasonic which are sold at 20,000 yuan each.

In fact, Changhong holds already both the general technologies for the production of the new TV sets as well as key concepts even its foreign competitors have not yet



On the Beijing market, Changhong's 43PDT18 sells best against all the other brands Photo by Zhuang Jian

grasped. Hence, Changhong is determined to forge its own path to the domestic and world markets.

The Japanese are swift movers however. In April this year, Toshiba increased investment in its joint venture in Dalian for the production of the PD series; in May, Hitachi built up a production assembly in Shenzhen for PD series tubes; in June, Hitachi also launched the production of the PD series in its joint venture in Xiamen; Panasonic continues to bring its new PD products to China; Samsung from South Korea brought its digital PD, LCD displaying PD and other PD series with more new hi technologies and functions; Philips and LG are also following suit.

Domestically, after Changhong, Hisense and Skyworth also launched their PD series. A number of small ventures like Beijing Chaowei, an electronic appliances producer, are discussing possible cooperation with Thompson of France for PD series production in China.

According to statistics, since the first PD TV appeared in 1998, the domestic production volume had climbed from 5,000 sets in 1998 to 200,000 sets in 2000.

Repairs Start on Ancient Garrison Wall

By Zhao Pu

A ceremony to kick off the restoration of the Wanpingcheng city wall was held last Friday in front of the east gate of the ancient mini-city.

The city, located to the east of the Lugou (Marco Polo) Bridge in Fengtai District, was first erect-

ed in 1640 during the Ming Dynasty as a defensive garrison to the west of the capital.

On July 7, 1937, Japanese forces attacked the garrison, marking the beginning of the war of resistance against Japanese aggression.

Wanpingcheng occupies an

area of 204,800 square meters and was listed as a National Cultural Relic in 1961.

The city wall of this small town remains basically intact, although some sections have been damaged by time and parts were destroyed by Japanese gunfire in 1937.

This is the second time renovation work has been carried out on the ancient wall, following a partial restoration in 1985.

The restoration, funded by the Beijing Bureau of Cultural Relics with over 3 million yuan, covers the 640-meter south city wall and 10 buildings on the wall.

The project plans to use original materials and adopt original techniques to revive the original structure of the wall.

Some parts ruined by gunfire in 1937 will be left untouched as an historical testament to the Japanese aggression. The project is due to be completed by June 30, 2002.



The two cats are no longer outside the restaurant Photo by Fan Jiwen

Deng Restaurant Closes Down

By Sun Ming

Deng Restaurant (邓家饭店), named after former leader Deng Xiaoping, was forced to close its doors on November 3.

According to manager of the restaurant Meng Jiawan, he was ordered to stop trading under that name by the Industry and Commence Bureau of Chongwen District the day before. Meng believes the closing of his restaurant is not reasonable.

Before its closure, the restaurant sported two fancy sculptures at the front entrance; a white cat and a black cat, a reference to the well-known saying by Deng: "It doesn't matter whether it's a black cat or a white cat; if catches mice, it's a good cat." The two cat sculptures have already been moved away.

Two waiters dressed in army fatigues greeted customers at the door and a line of red characters proclaimed "under the

leadship of Deng Xiaoping, we become rich" on the window. Inside the restaurant, many pictures of Deng hung on the walls, while the names of most dishes began with the word 'Deng'.

According to Meng, it was his deep respect for the former leader that prompted him to adopt his name as the theme for the restaurant. He also admitted that the restaurant had attracted more customers since he changed the name to Deng Restaurant one month ago.

However, according to the bureau, the restaurant violated the advertising law. In order to solicit customers, the restaurant flaunted the banner featuring a giant likeness of Deng Xiaoping, even though it had no actual connection with Deng.

According to the regulations, enterprises are prohibited from using the image or name of living or dead leaders to promote themselves.

He-Men Warm Up in Talent Contest

Handsome men from 38 countries took the stage at the Oriental Garden Hotel Wednesday night for the first round of the world final of the Manhunt International 2001 Talent Contest.

Their programs ranged from break dancing to poetry recitals. The atmosphere of the event was more like a party than a contest. The climax of the evening was when Bernardo Figaroa, Mr. Aruba invited all the candidates onto the stage to learn a folk dance with him.

The first Manhunt International was held in Singapore in 1987. The World Final 2001 will be held at Poly Theatre on November 12.



(Zhu Lin)

Photo by Jia Ting

Online Pedicure

By Su Wei

Ren Hehai, a 68 years old pedicurist and his three students are much busier these days.

Now they not only treat the patients who come to the Ruetan Xijie clinic in person, but also diagnose foot problems by E-mail.

In fact the clinic has been so inundated with requests for treatment via E-mail that they have had to hire a secretary to handle all the online correspondence.

"I think it is important that such problems be prevented or at least treated before they become severe," says Ren. In response to Ren's concern, Zhao Zongquan, a cousin of one of Ren's students, hit upon the idea of using the Internet to treat foot problems.

Patients can send an E-mail to zhaozongquan100@sohu.com, describing their symptoms and how long the problem

has lasted. "We can then make appropriate suggestions, such as wear larger size shoes, buy a particular type of medicine, or make an appointment and come here," according to Zhao. "Therefore patients will receive proper treatment. But Master Ren looks so tired..."

"Yes. I am tired after a long day's work. But I think it is good to relieve people's pain." Ren admitted it was difficult for him to learn to use a computer, but his students are young and must certainly do so.

Online treatment is just the latest major advance Ren has made in the treatment of foot problems. In 1957, he started using traditional Chinese methods to cure foot problems. "But at time no one believed such treatment could work, despite my efforts to convince people."

Ren pointed out operations are very common way of treating foot problems, even minor ones such as warts or calluses, however



Ren Hehai at work on a patient

Photo by Baizi

fewer people will suffer from foot problems. But it is impossible for me to teach more than three or four at a time. There is little opportunity for them to practice under my guidance." Ren said seriously. "Anyone who has some basic skills in pedicure and a love of this trade, I will tech them what I know!"

His three students are now capable of practicing independently. Meanwhile some young people from other provinces who came to Ren's clinic for one or two month's training, have decided to stay longer and become more skilled in treating foot problems.

Talking about plans for the future, Ren and his students are confident that they will develop a web site with information about all kinds of foot problems, their symptoms and the detailed treatment. "We do not worry that others will learn our secrets, we are doing good for all the people who suffering from foot problems."

Suicide in a Cinema

By Su Wei

A tragic occurrence took place in a cinema in Haidian earlier this week.

A young couple attempted to commit suicide during the screening of a movie. The woman died on the spot, however the man though seriously injured, is recovering in hospital.

A witness said at about 5:30 p.m., she heard a noise and turned around to see a woman lying in a pool of blood and a man next to her in the act of cutting his own throat. The woman was pronounced dead on arrival in Haidian hospital, but the man was out of danger, having failed to sever an artery.

Police are treating the incident as a suicide case. Both the man and the woman are locals, and both left suicide notes with their parents before going to the cinema.

Police also found a letter at the cinema, in which the couple both expressed that they loved each other deeply and were not willing to be separated.

Young Investors Organization Established

By Su Wei

An American and a Chinese student studying at Peking University have together initiated an organization called Sino-U.S. Young Investors Society (SUYIS). The organization, the first of the kind, held its first meeting last Saturday.

Chen Honglei, the president of SUYIS, hopes the organization will help young students become experienced investors. "With the support of foreign companies such as Merrill Lynch, MSA.com and Dell and the efforts of the core group, we will become the most influential organization in China!" he says confidently.

Joseph Lora, vice-president of SUYIS, says, "Changes in the world, especially in China are fast. We must keep up with changes and be ready for changes. Therefore we need 'jiaoliu' (exchange)!"

Half of the 20 core members of SUYIS are foreign students at the university, while the nearly 600 ordinary members include Chinese students from Peking, Tsinghua, Renmin universities, as well as universities in Hong Kong, Taiwan and foreign students from America, Britain, South Korea, Japan and Mexico.

Students whose majors relate to finance and international business see a real opportunity to benefit from the organization. Besides improving their English and learning investment and personal financing strategies, they can communicate with senior staff of foreign companies, have the opportunity to visit and even become a trainee in some big foreign companies.

The organization provides an opportunity for students to learn how to increase personal wealth, says Li Tianqiang, an MBA student at Peking University. "We need not only to know how to make money, but also how to manage money."

Bomb Scare Gets Security

By Sun Ming

A residential building in the south of Beijing was the scene of a breath-taking 'bomb scare' last Thursday.

In order to remove the suspect package to a safe place, security guard Wang Zhongbing ran down 25 flights of stairs with it in three minutes.

Fortunately, it turned out to be a false alarm. The 'bomb' was just a parcel containing some candles. It was left in an apartment on the 25th floor by two robbers. According to the woman resident, two men knocked at her door at about nine o'clock in the morning. She opened the door, believing them to be mail couriers.

After robbing the apartment, the two men left a package wrapped in brown paper and something that resembled a timer on the table. They told the hostess that the package would explode if she called the police within half an hour.

The woman ran down to call the security guards as soon as the robbers left. One of the guards, Wang Zhongbing, who was having breakfast, hurried to the apartment with the woman.

As a former policeman, Wang knew how to take precautions against explosives. He put the 'bomb' into a barrel and ran immediately to the stairs. He said later that he didn't take the elevator because he wanted to avoid endangering other people because it was a busy time and there probably would have been many people in the elevator. Within three minutes of running out of the woman's apartment, Wang placed the 'bomb' on the open ground outside the building.

When the explosives experts arrived and examined the parcel however, the so called bomb was found to be no more than a parcel containing several candles.

When asked what he was thinking about when running downstairs with the 'bomb', Wang answered that he didn't think about anything but how to run more quickly.

Young Computer Wizard Sentenced to Death

By Sun Ming

A 20-year-old computer programmer was sentenced to death last week on charges of robbery and murder. His accomplice Zhu Zheng was also sentenced to death.

Yu Zhe, who just days before his arrest was offered a job with a major multi-national computer company, together with Zhu robbed and killed a man in his own home in order to gain money to establish his own network company.

Yu Zhe was one of the top students in the computer department of his university in Beijing. It only took him two years to obtain all the credits that most other students spend four years to gain.

According to Yu, he had harbored a strong desire to establish

his own network company since he was a college student. However, the large amount of capital needed for such a venture made the realization of his dream seem impossible.

His friend Zhu suggested that robbery was the best way to raise money quickly, and Yu agreed. Unlike Yu, Zhu hated studying and had been in trouble frequently since childhood. At the age of 20, Zhu had already been to jail twice.

On 15 April this year, they chose at random a top-grade apartment as their target, and pretending to be plumbers, tricked the owner, Guan Wei, into opening the door. When they demanded money, Guan resisted. A struggle ensued and Zhu stabbed

Guan with a knife. Yu then hit him with a spanner, and Guan collapsed and died. The same afternoon, Zhu fled to Shanghai.

According to Yu, he didn't intend to commit the crime that day, because he had to go to Shanghai for an interview. Just that morning, he asked Zhu to postpone the robbery, but Zhu insisted on going through with it.

"I'm deeply repentant. I would now be a highly paid computer programmer if I hadn't gone along with him," said Yu. He says that before the robbery, he hacked into the data bank of a multinational computer company. Much to his surprise, the company located him and asked him to come for an interview. The

company informed that he could either join them with a well-paid job, or be thrown into prison for hacking into their data bank. Certainly, Yu opted for the former.

Yu called Zhu to tell him the good news at once, however Zhu had already been arrested. The police had been able to identify him because he dropped his pager at the scene of the crime! Shortly after, Yu was arrested in Shanghai.

"I want to live very much," says Yu. He has already devised a part of computer program during his time in prison. "I hope I have enough time to finish it, and I want to record my experience, from a brilliant undergraduate to a murderer."



Photo by Yang Yonghui



What is Transsexualism?

It is a disturbance of gender identity in which the person manifests, with constant and persistent conviction, the desire to live as a member of the opposite sex and progressively take steps to live in the opposite sex role full-time.

—Money, J. and Gaskin, R. J. sexologists



Diagnosis and Classification of Transsexualism.

Transsexualism is considered a psychiatric disorder. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: Third Edition, Revised" (DSM-III-R) gives the following diagnostic criteria:

1. A Sense of discomfort and inappropriateness about one's anatomic sex.
 2. A wish to be rid of one's genitals and to live as a member of the other sex.
 3. The disturbance has been continuous (not limited to periods of stress) for at least two years.
 4. Absence of physical or genetic abnormality.
 5. Not due to another mental disorder, such as schizophrenia.
- Source: Internal report produced by Suffolk Health Authority, May 1994



What is Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS)?

Sex reassignment surgery — a sex change operation — refers to the administration of surgery to change the sexual appearance according to one's sex identity. Operations usually include two kinds of surgery. One is surgery of the genitalia and/or breasts to approximate the physical appearance of the genetically opposite sex. Another is any and all other surgical procedures of a non-genitalia or non-breast nature conducted for the purpose of effecting a more masculine appearance in a genetic female or for the purpose of effecting more feminine appearance in a genetic male.

— Minkee Kim, University of Missouri-Kansas City



Jin Xing, dancer, the first person in China to undergo a sex-change operation.
Photo by Lu Beifeng

Change Your Sex

Surgeon pioneer demands tolerance for transsexuals

By Xiao Rong

The establishment of China's first clinic for sex-change operations by the nation's first plastic surgeon has revived media interest in issues of sexual identity and sex-change operations.

There are no laws or regulations in China about sex-change operations and the issue remains somewhat taboo in modern Chinese society. Chen Huanran, 38, pioneers research on transsexualism and has performed more than 90 percent of the nearly 100 operations in China.

Beijing Today interviewed Dr. Chen at the Gender Reconstruction Center of Plastic Surgery Hospital of Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences and then sought out other Beijingers' opinions.

Beijing Today: When is the appropriate time for sex-change operations and what kind of transsexual is suitable?

Chen: The physical outcome of an early treatment can be expected to be more satisfactory by comparison with starting later, especially from male to female. This is an enormous lifelong advantage instead of having to live with a deep voice and

other scars.

Thus, the earlier the operation is performed, the easier transsexuals can adjust themselves according to their sexual identity, and they can avoid confusion about themselves.

But sex change operations are usually performed at the age 18-21 as most children with gender identity disorders will not grow up to become transsexuals and adolescents in many countries are still legally dependent on the consent of their parents when deciding on medical treatment.

According to the specific situation in our country, we have very strict criteria in choosing suitable transsexual clients for sex-change operations. Only those over 18 with the permission of their parents and the written evaluation of psychiatrist as well as a notary certificate, can undergo operations.

There should also be a period of one to two years of living a different gender identity while the patient continues hormone therapy. In other words, not all transsexuals who desire sex-change operations are appropriate for surgery.

Beijing Today: How do you evaluate objectively the possible outcome of sex-change operations?

Chen: On the whole, most transsexuals who have operations were satisfied with the sex change itself. Nevertheless, sex change operations do not guarantee solving every problem that transsexuals have. For example, remains of the beard, large feet and hands, the quality of the voice, and an Adam's apple with male to female. Social pressure on women to pay more attention to their appearance is also one reason. Female-to-male transsexuals are usually dissatisfied with their new genitals due to medical restrictions.

But the most important thing is that they can live their new

gender role feeling their identity fits. They have a more comfortable relationship with other people around their environment.

Beijing Today: Have you ever encountered misunderstandings in society? How do you handle them?

Chen: Of course I have met with ridicule and criticism, especially in medical circles. One of the main doubts is that sex change operations attempt to remove healthy organs of the human body to satisfy psychological needs.

For a while, I intended to give up my beloved career because I was confused about whether I had committed numerous sins by doing sex-change operations. But when I saw my patients were satisfied with their regeneration, I became determined to persist with my former choice. In my opinion, transsexualism is just another illness, like catching a cold.

Why doesn't our society grant transsexuals tolerance and concern instead of hatred and fear? Only when the outside world treats transsexuals equally can they become accustomed to ordinary life and live happily.

Moreover, sex change operations are a very complicated problem in many ways including the law, ethics, morality and sociology, which demands mutual cooperation and the understanding of experts and ordinary people.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Tang Denghua, psychiatrist at the Psychological Therapy Department of the Mental Health Institute of Peking University

As there are no exact pathological reasons for transsexualism and psychological and hormone therapies have proven largely ineffective, sex-change operations may be one of the most effective and economic therapies for transsexualism as operations can greatly help reduce

the gender dysphoria of the patients.

As far as I'm concerned, one of the two most important factors in granting an operation is to ask the permission of the parents or the relatives of the patient, especially in China with such a long traditional history. Also the patients have the right to know the risks of sex change operations in order to be well prepared.

With the degeneration of the sexual reproductive function, the psychological and social functions of sex must instead grow increasingly important. Thus we should try to give more understanding to transsexuals.

A male-to-female transsexual patient of Dr. Chen (requested anonymity)

Although we are only a small part of society, we still long for the normal life of ordinary people. Every one of us cannot choose our born sex, but to select the sexual identity we have known is our right provided we don't bring harm to others. With more and more people tolerating the existence of homosexuals, I'm sure acceptance of transsexuals will not be long coming.

Pan Suiming, professor of the Sociology Department of Renmin University

Transsexualism is a very complicated phenomenon with contentious pathological and social reasons. So I think the use of sex-change operations should be more prudent and only when other therapies fail, can we choose sex-change operations.

The transsexual should also be fully aware of the possible outcomes of the operation. Moreover, the operation is only the first step. What's more important is to help the patient adapt to the role of the opposite sex. The miseries of transsexuals mainly come from the conflict between their desired gender and the way society regards them.

There are also some transsexuals who are actually avoiding the reality of their original gender identity. They say they are not qualified for the role of a male, and so they can only seek the role of a female for which they are probably also unsuitable. In performing sex-change operations, there will be a dilemma of this kind for transsexuals.

Qi Lihua, director of the No.2 Civil Court of Beijing No.2 Intermediate People's Court

It's about the freedom of people to choose their desired sex, just like everyone has his own right to select his own lifestyle. Although there is no relevant law or regulation on sex-change operations, I don't think it's necessary to establish a new law to especially protect transsexuals because they are only a very small segment of society.

With regard to special circumstances, like the marriage and divorce registration, the sexual status of an identification card and driving license, relevant departments could handle these issues by acknowledging their new sex after sex change operations.

Mr. Peng, middle-school teacher

I think the performance of sex-change operations is just ridiculous and unbelievable. I'm a person who has been deeply influenced by the traditional thinking of Confucius. Male or female is born and should not be changed easily.

In addition, the removal of the original healthy genitals is too cruel and violates the law of nature. Another important thing is that the operation is not all-powerful, as even after the operation, both sexes cannot have a reproductive function. What's left behind is the possible failure of the surgery and the patient's adaptability to a new sexual role, which is more chancey.

By Chen Ying

After a violent quarrel with his lover, Beijing singer Mao Ning was treated for stab wounds at hospital. He then disappeared for more than six months. His assailant was arrested and later sentenced to two and half years. Shanghai pop singer Mao Amin also disappeared several times after allegations of tax evasion.

Singers and actors, once well-known in China, are disappearing only to reappear in the media involved in sensational drug, tax and sex scandals. Nobody can guess the fate of these so-called "wenti mingxing" — problem stars. But they have definitely captured attention. With opening and reform, western music, movies and entertainment culture are marching into China.

People, especially teenagers, have more opportunities to enjoy entertainment. By watching TV, going to the cinema and concerts, they sometimes learn to adore singers and actors. Just like western teenagers sometimes seem obsessed with Leonardo's latest squeeze or Britney's latest beau, their Chinese counterparts grow increasingly fascinated by entertainment news.

What do Beijingers think about the latest phenomenon of so-called "trouble stars"? Opinions follow:

Xie Lizhong, professor, Beijing University

The concept of "problem" is different between eras, societies

and cultures. By definition, it embodies values of moral majority. For instance, homosexuality was once looked upon as a crime in Europe during the 17th century. But now, it's largely tolerated in the west. That means it's no big deal in some circumstances but a disaster in others. So it's not proper to criticize someone by adopting the most popular view.

There are two important facets to a modern society. First, the accumulation of so much science, intellect, order and discipline have come to restrain people's behavior. People abide by social rules and society can be considered like a body. But it's also important to embody an individual character. People are eager to rid themselves of the shackles of authority and society. It's a contradiction. The more rigid a society, the more the trouble and vice-versa.

As to the young, they usually resist traditional values in some romantic ways. They are not burdened because they haven't gotten anything from society. They want to prove themselves as they grow. They attempt to change the social order by their efforts. So they choose issues different from the traditional view.

Modern society seemed like a

Leading Teens Astray?

Fallen Stars Return as Troubling Role Models



Picture by Pang Li

show. The media is so developed that anything can be broadcast to the world quickly. Although some people won't seek the spotlight, most of them want a part in the story. Performers are more noticeable for this.

People should be more tolerant only if the trouble-stars don't break the law or basic social rules. Otherwise, the media should instruct people more positively by criticizing their behavior.

Xu Wei, employee Starmaker Company

I would rather appreciate the healthy and active performers. For trouble-stars, their behavior may harm them even if they do have no influence on others.

Although there are some problems, I think it's better to let entertainment develop more freely. There must be reasons for such a phenomenon to exist. Adults can distinguish "right and wrong" for most cases, but the young may

be influenced by the issues. Today, children can obtain information through all kinds of media. They will degenerate if without the correct guidance. The situation in the West may be more deteriorated than in China. The media should instruct teenagers in the right way.

For the performers, the test of time is the best way to prove something. For example, Madonna was looked upon as one of the rebellious idols in the 1980s. But now she has become more mature and takes more care with her music.

Wu Xiaomei, clerk

All this trendy stuff doesn't really matter. And I also think there isn't so much difference between performers and ordinary people. Everyone makes mistakes during his or her life. It's wrong to denounce them just because of some shortcomings. People should focus more on their acting and singing talents.

It's true many teens blindly worship some performers. But without all the media circus, teenagers would never know about stars' personal habits and would never imitate what they have done. I really doubt the media's motives sometimes.

SOUND BITES

"We carried out the tests in a secure laboratory, using the scenario of an envelope. Subsequent tests found that the anthrax spores were no longer active and not alive."

—Athanasios Bogiatzis, head of the microbiology department at Graz University, Austria describes a new spray that kills bacteria within seconds when applied to envelopes.

"I would say for the whole year next year, we should brace ourselves for a period of global recession. I think we should be cautious of that kind of projection."

—Supachai Panitchpakdi, next head of the World Trade Organization

"Many people are distracted and may even feel that voting isn't as important as other things this fall. And yet others passionately believe that voting is the most patriotic thing an American can do."

—Sam Reed, Washington State's secretary of state

By Chen Ying

Improvement over the past five years

Compared with a similar survey conducted in 1996, the proportion of Chinese people with basic science literacy has increased by 1.2%. Now 14 out of every 1,000 people are considered to have basic science literacy. (The average increase in the past five years is about 0.24% per year.)

Although the level of science literacy is low compared with developed countries, China has made significant progress in this regard. The increase is mainly due to the emphasis by the government on popularizing science.

Since the reform and opening up policy was introduced over 20 years ago, science and education have been seen as key factors ensuring lasting economic development.

A higher proportion of males than females show science literacy

The proportion of science literate men is twice that of women. Although a discrepancy between the sexes is common virtually everywhere in the world, the difference between men and women in developed countries is only around 10%.

The traditional idea that men are superior to women still persists in some people's minds, especially in rural areas. Some still believe that education is wasted on women and they are only suitable for housework.

Therefore, in some rural areas, boys still have more opportunities than girls to go to school, especially when parents do not have enough money to fund the education of all their children.

Furthermore, a greater number of women than men say they have no interest in science and technology, and that they find it too dry.

Television is the main source for science and technology information

Among all the listed sources for obtaining science and technology information, television rated the highest at 83%, followed by newspaper and magazines (52%). However in America, newspaper and magazines rated about the same as TV as an information source, at almost 80% each.

It is true that the improved living standards mean that more people can afford TV, but the most important reason may be that even illiterate people can watch TV. In contrast, not everyone is capable of reading newspapers, especially in rural areas.

Furthermore, in some areas people can buy and watch TV, but it is difficult to obtain a newspaper. Few people living in remote mountainous regions have the opportunity to buy or subscribe to newspapers or magazines.

Science Literacy Better Than Before But...



Sometimes science and I are very close

By Su Wei

How 'scientifically literate' are Chinese people? What are the main sources for information about science and technology? What is the public's attitude towards science and technology?

Recently, China Science and Technology Association released the results of a one-year survey on scientific literacy in China and the factors influencing it.

The association quizzed over 3,000 people country-wide on their basic scientific knowledge, as well as their attitudes towards recent scientific advances and the effect such advances have had on their lives.

Picture by Lao Du

Science facilities under-utilized

86% of the people surveyed have never been to a scientific and technological museum, 81% have never visited a scientific and technological exhibition, 73% have never been to a library or public reading room and 68% have never visited a zoo or botanical garden.

Furthermore, fewer than 2% of the surveyed visited a scientific and technological museum more than three times last year.

There are only about 300 scientific and technological museums in China, compared with more than 4,000 in Japan and over 10,000 in America. Furthermore, even in some intermediate cities such as Ningbo, there are no such museums.

Even where such facilities exist, they usually need to incorporate a dancing hall or karaoke in order to make a profit.

Respectable occupation, but not the ideal one

Being a scientist is regarded as a respectable occupation, because of scientists' efforts in promoting social progress and helping raise the standard of living. This indicates that the public recognize the importance of science and technology in social life.

However, parents ranked being a doctor first as the ideal occupation for their children, while being a scientist ranked second. It may be due to the fact that some people consider scientists to do little more than spend all their days and nights working in the lab.

Furthermore, some people see doctors as enjoying a higher social status and income, and perhaps have the opportunity to earn a little extra on the side.

But for a scientist, especially those in the research of mathematics, astronomy, and geology, the average monthly income is only about 1,000 yuan. (However scientists in the area of biological technology can sometimes make hundreds of thousands yuan for one project.)

Students show highest proportion of science literacy

The survey shows that the rate of science literacy for students is 11.4%, higher than all working people, even specialized technicians, who rated only 6.3%.

Students generally have more spare time than working people, and therefore more opportunities to obtain all kinds of knowledge through reading books, magazines and newspapers, going to museums and exhibitions, surfing the Internet and watching TV.

But for working people, after a day's work, they often have to do household chores. Even when they have some spare time, they may just chat or watch a soap opera on TV.

They consider such activities do not require much mental work and are good ways to relax. Meanwhile, adults tend not to be as curious as students.

For the specialized technicians, they have a deep understanding or a good command of their specific area, but their interests and understanding often do not extend beyond that area.

Take people living in the community of the State Meteorological Administration for example. Even children there know a lot about meteorology, but they generally lack even basic knowledge on other subjects such as biology and medicine.

It is clear that with increased economic development, the level of science literacy is raised. In America for example, working people and students almost have the same amount of spare time, and hence similar opportunities to broaden their horizons.

Retirees have low proportion of science literacy

The proportion of science literacy for retirees is below 1%. This may be due to the fact that relatively few retired people surf the Internet or read magazines and newspapers. They may also be less able to spend freely on books and subscribing newspapers, let alone purchase computers.

Furthermore, the retired are often neglected by society, with activities such as visiting museums or going to lectures on popular science generally only organized for students.

Although there are some activities for the retired people, they appear to have failed to attract the interests of retired people, at least as far as science and technology is concerned.

Little information obtained from Internet

Only 2% of the surveyed say the Internet is their main source for science and technology information compared with 53% in America. Currently only 21 million Chinese people have the access to the Internet.

The first reason may be that computers remain a luxury item for most Chinese. Secondly, many people lack the necessary skills to find information using a computer; for example, the ability to write using pinyin or the often complex input methods for Chinese character. Lastly, some people consider computers not to be a worthwhile investment, in terms of financial returns.

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County Magistrate Jailed for Vote Rigging



Zhong Hongmao, the notorious county magistrate, was arrested on Aug. 13 at the order of Heyuan People's Procuratorate

By Ivy Zhang

Last week, Zhong Hongmao, county magistrate and former deputy secretary of Heping County Commission, Guangdong province, was sentenced to two years imprisonment after serving in the position for only 30 days. Accused of rigging a vote by the intermediate court of Heyuan city, Zhong is the highest-ranking official to be convicted of vote rigging since the founding of the People's Republic in 1949.

On June 15, a vote was carried out in compliance with the normal procedure at the forth plenary meeting of the 12th People's Congress in Heping county. Zhong, as deputy secretary of the county party committee, unexpectedly defeated the only other candidate Lai Zhimin, with 126 votes to 81, to become the new county magistrate.

6 blankets for 6 votes

Heping, one of the most poverty-stricken counties in Guangdong, is situated in a remote mountainous area within the jurisdiction of Heyuan city in the east of the province.

On June 5, Zhong called Huang Lanjie, the vice president of People's Hospital of Heping County and asked her to approach representatives of Heshi town congress and recommend him as candidate for county magistrate. Huang was promoted by Zhong and has a close relationship with him. After receiving the call, Huang went to Cao Shiheng, representative of the people's congress at the county level, who promised to support Zhong, but added that peasants usually ask for 'return favors'. With Zhong's permission, Huang bought 6 blankets at a cost of 960 yuan and sent them to other representatives as gifts.

On June 15, Zhong asked Huang to approach Cao and tell him to ask all the representatives from Heshi town to write Zhong's name on the vote slips. Soon after the vote, Huang gave Cao 4,000 yuan, of which Cao himself got 1,000 yuan and another six representatives got 500 yuan each.

"Peasant representatives all demand return favors"

Zhong also sought representatives to fill in nomination forms so as to make his win look natural. On the morning of June 8, Huang Zenggui, one of the representatives from Pengzhai town, came to Zhong's office on business and Zhong took this opportunity to voice his intention. Huang agreed but told him the peasant representatives all required something in return. Zhong gave Huang 6,000 yuan that afternoon.

Afterwards, Huang divided the money between 12 representatives, and these 12 all nominated Zhong as county magistrate a few days later. Later, three representatives withdrew their nominations, however they all voted for Zhong in the poll.

Friend helps distribute bribes

Huang Jinshui came from the same town as Zhong and operates a local mine in a nearby village with the help of Zhong. In order to bribe the representatives, Zhong sought Huang's help. On June 8, Wu Tingchuan took 500 yuan from Huang as "dinner fee" and was requested to approach other representatives in the town. Huang passed 4,000 yuan to Wu, who kept 1,000 and distributed the remaining cash among eight other representatives. In the poll, nine representatives from the town wrote Zhong's name on the vote slip. In this way, a total of 29 representatives accepted Zhong's "gifts" either directly or indirectly.

Today the once promising and ambitious county magistrate is in jail. At the detainment bureau of Heyuan city, Zhong told reporters, "I'm sorry for what I did to the 480,000 residents of Heping country. I destroyed my own future."

Quitting Drugs and Looking Ahead

An addicted actor turns on a new leaf of life

By Ivy Zhang

On the evening of November 2, a movie Quitting made its debut at the 21st Century Theatre in front of an audience of some 1,500. After the 2-hour-long movie, the entire cast and crew appeared on stage and answered questions posed by media and audience.

Quitting is something of a documentary film which depicts a young man, Jia Hongsheng's journey from the forefront of China's artistic movement in the early 1990's, to a mental institution and finally to re-discover himself and his family. It is a story full of faith, humor and hope.

In the late 80's, a new film star, Jia Hongsheng, emerged in China. Labeled "the thug idol", he gained fame playing gangsters and heroes in a series of Chinese movies. Jia's fragile mental state, coupled with the abuse of drugs gradually led him into a state of despair. He stopped acting and cut himself off from all his friends. Jia's parents, who were actors in a small theater troupe in Northeast China, went to live in Beijing to try to help their son. Every character in "Quitting" is played by people who were actually part of Jia Hong Sheng's life. The film seeks to be unflinchingly realistic in its portrayal of its characters and the period.

Family values

Jia's father who was an actor himself before quit his job in North China and took his wife to Beijing in an effort to help their son out. "Let bygones be bygones," he said when he walked onto the stage after the movie, "Today, we as a family are living happily and harmoniously. We appreciate all your concern and affection for us during the past years."

Director Zhang Yang got to know Jia's family nearly two years ago, and got the idea of making a movie about the family's life. At the beginning, they were reluctant to accept his idea, worrying about the possible side effects of such a proposal, and Zhang says it took great courage to be able to expose all their hardships, sorrows and miseries to the world. "This movie might serve as a best start and stepping stone for this family. I hope the whole society as well as the media could be more supportive and more tolerant towards this family," Zhang said.

In the movie there are many scenes depicting the family's daily life from inside and they are all touching. One scene shows Jia Hongsheng smoking drugs and becoming a little "crazy". He couldn't bear the fact that his parents were peasants and out of date both in life style and thinking. On his 30th birthday, he drunk too much and hit his father hard in the face. His old man stood there, looking at his son in bewilderment, with tears flowing down his face ...

What does he feel about his parents now? Have they bridged the generation gap? Jia said his parents left a deep impression on him when he was a kid. As he grew up, he wanted to regain the feeling he had when he was young, and now, he is getting used to the pressure from his father.

With family's love and encouragement, Jia Hongsheng's darkest days have come to an end. All his trouble seems far away, as his most favorite song Yesterday sings. In an answer to a reporter's question on his future plan, Jia claimed that he would continue to shoot good movies, which he hopes could bring happiness and fun to his family, friends and audience as well.

Drug problem

In the movie, Jia began to experience his spiritual crisis when he acted in Spider's Kiss. He wants to be the best and he hates to be called "asshole" by other people. He learns to smoke drugs, and he learns fast... He immerses himself in music day in and day out, walking in the rain, lying on the grass, playing guitar. He fights against himself, trying to find himself and his real value as well. The drugs lead to family problems, nearly destroying himself and his family.

However, at the discussion after the film, the drug problem seemed to be a sensitive topic, and everyone was careful not to touch it. The seminar had been progressing for quite a while and all the questions were unrelated to drugs, until a westerner stood up and asked, "What advice could you give to other drug addicts? What can the government do to stop it?"

"Drug taking is a very selfish thing," says Jia before the two questions are completely translated, "if you want to try

drugs, you have to leave yourself a way out."

This is the only time drugs are mentioned during the seminar. It seems that drugs are still too controversial a problem to be addressed.

Movie Censorship

When asked how the censors reacted to the movie, director Zhang Yang says it went through the censorship process quite smoothly. Only a detail was revised as requested. In the movie, Jia originally hit his father three times, however after the examination, one was cut out and in the final version, there are only two punches.

Unfortunately, we were unable to interview Jia, who left town after the screening to shoot an advertisement. But we can say he does a great job, his family does a great job and Quitting is a great movie.

"It's really interesting to see the 90's already as part of history ... to get to know what's happening to China and get a look at a different world," Philip Tinari from Philadelphia, China-U.S. Fulbright Program Student commented about the movie, "It's a very touching story of a strong person, his family and the changes they have to go through."

"Actually we have movies back in US focusing on

drugs, heroin, and so on.

But they are more flashy and not much concerned about the individual drama. In Quitting, people are quitting drugs. It's more about struggle and the hardship they are overcoming."



Jia Hongsheng (right) and Zhang Yang (left), the director of "Quitting", pose in front of movie poster
Photos by Cui Jun

Who is Jia Hongsheng?

1987-1993: Jia played the lead role in a series of popular movies, including *Morning Beijing*, *Silk Snake Murder*, *Weekend Lover*, *Black Fire* and *Black Snow*.

1992: Jia played the lead in *Spider's Kiss*, directed by Zhang Yang, the director of *Shower*. During the shooting, he became crazy about rock & roll and took John Lennon of the Beatles as his spiritual guide. Meanwhile, he began to take drugs.

1997: Jia quit taking drugs and his mental health improved.

Oct. 2000: Jia began to work with Zhang Yang on his documentary film "Quitting".



Following the Call of

Magic

By Hu Xiaoli

In the Lanti Magic Goods Shop, located near Chang'an Shopping Center, objects begin to disappear and mutate in a world where the laws of human perception are completely subverted. Inextinguishable Candles, Magic Glass, Cards, Magic Crystals... these tools of the sorcerer draw souls into a sphere where sense is sneered at.

Wearing a black suit and long hair, Ti Mai, the owner of the shop, stands behind the counter, cheerfully introducing a product by performing to an interested buyer. The customer was asked to take out a coin and secretly mark it. Ti then took it in his hands, holding it up to his ears. The customer watched with anticipation. In a second, Ti whisked the coin away and finally, the customer found the marked coin in a tiny box wrapped in paper inside two larger boxes. The stunned customer looked at the little box, seemingly baffled by this performance. "Actually, all the products here are just little tricks, I'm good with all of them," Ti proudly stated.

Ti Mai, 23 years' old, is not simply a shop owner, but has been involved in magic arts for a number of years. He prefers to go by the title magician rather than shop owner.

Raised in a World of Magic

"I never thought I would be a magician when I grew up," Ti Mai said with a smile, as if other forces were responsible for his vocation. Ti's initial rejection of a career in magic stems from a rebellion against his father, who is a famous magician in his own right, and the only one in China to specialize in fish magic. Ti explained, "I wanted to go my own way and do more exciting things."

According to the traditions of magic in China, the art can only be passed on to one's direct line of descent. "So, my father had been hoping I would become a magician like him. If I didn't learn, his tour de force would be lost in the future, but I just refused," Ti said, smiling mischievously. Every time, when his father wanted him to learn, he would find any excuse to wriggle it out. "Having homework to do was always the most popular one!" Ti recalled, laughing loudly.

But little Ti never refused to watch his father's performance from backstage. Sometimes when his father needed a hand, he would happily serve as the magician's assistant. After the show, he would get some pocket money from his father. "That was part of the reason for me to go with him," he joked.

Ti's first public magic show

was at a kindergarten party. That was the first time little Ti actively asked his father to teach him magic skills. "My father was initially very happy, but was disappointed in the end when he realized I was doing it just for the prize." The kid who came first would be awarded a basketball. Ti ended up getting the ball. "But I completely forgot what magic I performed at that time."

Stories like this abounded right through Ti's time at middle school. Using the magic he learned from his father, he always got plenty of attention from female classmates. "I was continually disappointing my father," Ti confessed.

Making His Own Magic

When his father had given up teaching Ti Mai magic skills, Ti suddenly developed a real interest in a career in magic.

That was one year after he graduated from high school. During that time, he drifted in and out of jobs, but never stayed long in any one place. "I often had words with my bosses because I couldn't stand their authoritarian manner," Ti explained. So, he stayed at home, and enjoyed hanging out with his mates in discos and bars.

A TV program changed Ti's life style one day that year. He accidentally came across a magic illusion by a foreign magician. The elegant manner and performance of the magician, the mysterious music and lighting effects on the stage deeply attracted the young boy's heart. He was transfixed there, saying to himself that maybe he was not so disillusioned by a career in magic. This was the first time Ti sincerely hoped to learn tricks from his father. "I thought my father would be happy on hearing this news, but to my surprise he even refused to teach me," recalled Ti. The truth turned out that his father was afraid his son would put the magic skills to use for gambling, but looking at the serious expression on the son's face, the father finally agreed.

In order to test his patience, Ti's father asked him to learn the traditional Chinese Two Circles' trick: two circles are stuck together, and the magician



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Practicing when alone in the shop



Learning magic skills from his father



Performing at primary school

separates them in a second. Ti stayed at home for about three months, practicing. "My friends were surprised at my change in lifestyle," Ti chuckled. That was a hard time for young Ti. Without the loud music in the discos and bars, the boy would at times feel bored, but remembering his promise to his father, he persisted. "When I finally performed this trick to my father, he was extremely happy," Ti recalled, "but I still wanted to give up soon after my first public performance." This performance was part of a big ceremony in front of a packed theater. Ti said he felt tense and nervous, but had to smile to the public. Although he was warmly applauded by the audience, this cool young guy found the attention overwhelming.

"I wanted to quit," the boy told his father after the performance. His father looked calm on hearing the news, and flatly informed the boy that he had only performed the simplest magic trick, and that he had better master the intricate nine circles' routine. After hearing his father's words, Ti realized in a flash that his life could no longer stray from a career in magic. "Maybe it's a kind of responsibility, a recall, or plain fate which led me to the path my father trod."

Who Chooses Who? A Career in Magic

Speaking of the latest performance, the excitement still beamed across Ti's face. It was the first time he performed for a large magic event without his father accompanying him. He performed 'Candles and Pigeons'.

When he pronounced the words "Good Evening", the crowd buzzed with eager anticipation. When he finally conjured the three-lit candles into three white pigeons, the stunned silence erupted into deafening applause. "I really enjoyed the magic I brought to the audience," Ti said happily. "I feel like a dream maker when standing on the stage."

But this dream maker sometimes makes bad dreams. Once, in Shanghai, Ti performed a trick involving transforming a torn piece of paper back into the

original piece. He successfully turned the paper back into one piece, but there was still a slight tear in the middle of the paper due to the damp weather. He carefully held the paper when holding it up to the audience, "Fortunately, no one came up to touch it," he recalled, laughing.

In between performances, Ti learns skills from his father, who has mastered a whole repertoire of traditional Chinese tricks, many of them less showy than foreign ones. He cited his father's classic Fish Magic as an example. It's a tough show to pull off, and as such is very exciting to watch. The performer can fish in the audience, bring a dead fish back to life, and conjure fish into a mermaid, all of which aroused a warm response when his father performed overseas. "The more I learn from my father, the more I am astounded by our traditional magic skills," he said.

"China is the original birthplace of magic. Her traditional magic is mysterious and wonderful. What we need to do is to make it more interesting with stronger visual effects. I am hoping to combine traditional magic routines with modern performing techniques in the future." Speaking of his ambition, Ti looked serious and mature.

Ti said he felt himself growing up suddenly as soon as he stepped into a career in magic. He has lost the interest of hanging out with friends and killing time in discoteques or wandering the streets. All his time is spent on practicing skills, studying the art of magic, and performing.

Sometimes Ti watches magic programs with his father and guess the skills behind the magic. "I have finally found my own destiny although I am following in my father's footsteps. The most important thing however is that I have grown up in my own way." Ti added gravely, "And I am sure I can surpass my father in magic."

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Tangerines Sizzle Down The TH Cable

At last, 'Tangerines Turned Red' is enjoying its space in the sun after its birth 14 years ago. The novel, which Qi Jun wrote in 1987, became more and more obscure before a TV series under the same name brought it into the public arena.

'Tangerines Turned Red' successfully made its debut on Taiwanese TV screens in July 2001, and was rebroadcast 3 months later. The tragic story soon stirred the emotions of viewers, and is facing a great future just around the corner. According to Liu Zhi, the editor, it was the predictable market profit of 'Tangerines Turned Red' that made the People's Literature Publishing House, the top publishing house in China, decide to republish it.

In the present fashion of reminiscing, the novel has finally entered its golden age, after another reprint this November. Since it was republished this October, 20,000 copies have already been sold.

(By Shi Xinyu)



Home in the Village

My auntie really has too many worries. She worries about the droughts, about the typhoons, about too much rain making the grains go moldy, about the hens refusing to lay eggs, and about me, her dear niece, always not walking like a fair lady. But what worries her most is my eldest uncle, her husband, an officer in town, not writing home for a long time. Around that time auntie would not be in the mood for anything. So I write to my eldest uncle frequently and remind him of mailing more letters home.

Though the letters from my eldest uncle are always very short and at times composed of almost the same words, my auntie will still hold the paper in both hands and read it over and over with a happy smile on her face.

Doubts and Suspicions

Auntie stepped upstairs eventually. Looking at my vexed face, she asked me to sit by her side on the bed. "A new one will come to our family tomorrow," she said to me merrily.

"A new one?" I had got some hint that auntie was doing something stupendous, but still I had no idea what exactly she would do.

"I will choose your eldest uncle a second---, eh --, a third wife. All things settled, she will come

tomorrow," Auntie smoothly said word by word. I was astonished.

"Auntie, how strange! How can you do such a thing? My eldest uncle is not home!"

"That doesn't matter. We'll receive her at home first. And your eldest uncle will come back sooner or later after this month."

"You let me write 'the tangerines turned red' in a letter to eldest uncle referring to that, right? But how could he understand it?"

"Oh, it is your eldest uncle who asked me to find him a healthy village girl. He wants her to bear him a son," Auntie smiled with lips closed lightly, "And if the one I find bears a son soon, I would feel reassured anyway. Then that social climber cannot be proud any more."

"Auntie, which social climber?" I got scared again.

"Your eldest uncle married a social climber a long time ago. I got the news from Auntie Ye when I burnt joss sticks in the temple last year. She informed me and asked me not to be angry. How could I be angry? It is my fault I cannot give birth to a child."

Expectation

I guess happiness and worries must struggle in the heart of Xiou Fen in the days waiting for my eldest uncle's return. Though I am two years younger than her, the many wedding banquets I attended have taught me that

Xiou Fen is a most different bride: she had no sedan chair, no showy piping or drumming music: she even had no bridegroom. She slept with me, the niece of her husband, on the first night of her marriage. She was arranged to a strange family by others but received warm love here. Her status is so special. I wish she could have a happy life. But her future is unpredictable, and so is her friendship with me.

Also there is my sixth uncle, he is amazingly an old school mate of Xiou Fen! If Xiou Fen could grow up in a happy family, and could go to middle school, would she meet my sixth uncle again and be a friend to him? I cannot think any further because that would make me quite sentimental. My sixth uncle often uses a word "disconsolate", and maybe that feeling could be called disconsolate.

My Sixth Uncle

As they stare at each other, Xiou Fen knows what is in my sixth uncle's words. And I got it too. But a sudden bitter sense swelled in my heart, the tangerine in my hand dropping on the floor.

In the sunshine, my sixth uncle looked at Xiou Fen's forehead carefully. In a soft voice, he asked: "Is there a little scar left from that time you fell down from the wall?"

"Yes, a very small one. And I

hide it with my hair," answered Xiou Fen with head half lowered.

"Let me see." He moved his body closer to Xiou Fen.

Xiou Fen dodged back from him and I could not help whispering "Uncle!" He was a little startled and stepped back.

Tangerines Turned Red

My eldest uncle sat on the veranda, reading, while Xiou Fen stood behind him, peeling the tangerine and giving it to him in parts. He put them into his mouth absent-mindedly, chewing. I watched them for a while from a distance, then left.

Tangerines are red and the eldest uncle comes back. Now he has a new love and they look so sweet. But some verses taught by my teacher come to my mind suddenly: "Good things never last long, just as colored clouds easily gone." My eldest uncle will leave home sooner or later, would he take Xiou Fen with him? If Xiou Fen was left here, could she be my happy sister as before?

Missing

"Don't forget to mention me in the letters to your eldest uncle."

When Xiou Fen said these words, I saw the same look as when she asked me to mention her in letters to my sixth uncle. I do not know if the two men enjoy a similar position in her heart. She takes the sixth uncle

for a caring elder brother, and she treats the eldest uncle as the most respected father. But my eldest uncle is her husband and they used to sleep in the same bed. So she must miss my eldest uncle more.

The letters from my eldest uncle are as simple as before, but added "Same to Xiou Fen" at the end. When auntie sent them to her, she always read them again and again. My auntie's smiles also appear on Xiou Fen's face. She is more literary than auntie, so she always sighs, "what a short letter."

Grief for the Dying Young

There are no tangerines on the tree any more, and all the leaves had fallen down from the branches. A few tangerines were scattered in the mud on the ground, decaying in a gray color. Tangerines had been red and ripe this year and will experience the same process next year. But next year I need not write "tangerines turned red" to my eldest uncle.

To him, the death of Xiou Fen may be something like the tangerines falling to the earth. I'm not in the mood to write to him and have no idea as to his reaction when he got the message of Xiou Fen's death. Anyway, at least I know he would not bother to add "Same to Xiou Fen" in the end of his short letters any more.

Extract from *Tangerines Turned Red*

Tangerines Turned Red is a traditional tragedy that takes place in the late Qing Dynasty in a small town in south China.

At the time when tangerines turned red, a woman, "my auntie", chose a third wife, Xiou Fen, for her husband, "my eldest uncle". The aim of this marriage is to defeat the second wife "my eldest uncle" secretly married in town, as well as ensuring the succession of the family blood. But it fails: Xiou Fen spiritually falls in love with "my sixth uncle" and loses her life after an abortion accident, and "my eldest uncle" still only comes back home once a year at the time when tangerines turn red.

Qi Jun is pseudonym of Pan Xizhen, a female writer born in 1917. 30 years of life in a traditional family in the south of China endowed her with the gift of describing the fate of women in that parting age. Her works are considered "a picture of times gone by, frame by frame, telling tales in a tone tender and blue," by Bai Xian-yong, a famous modern writer in Taiwan. (editor)



Photo by Cui Jun



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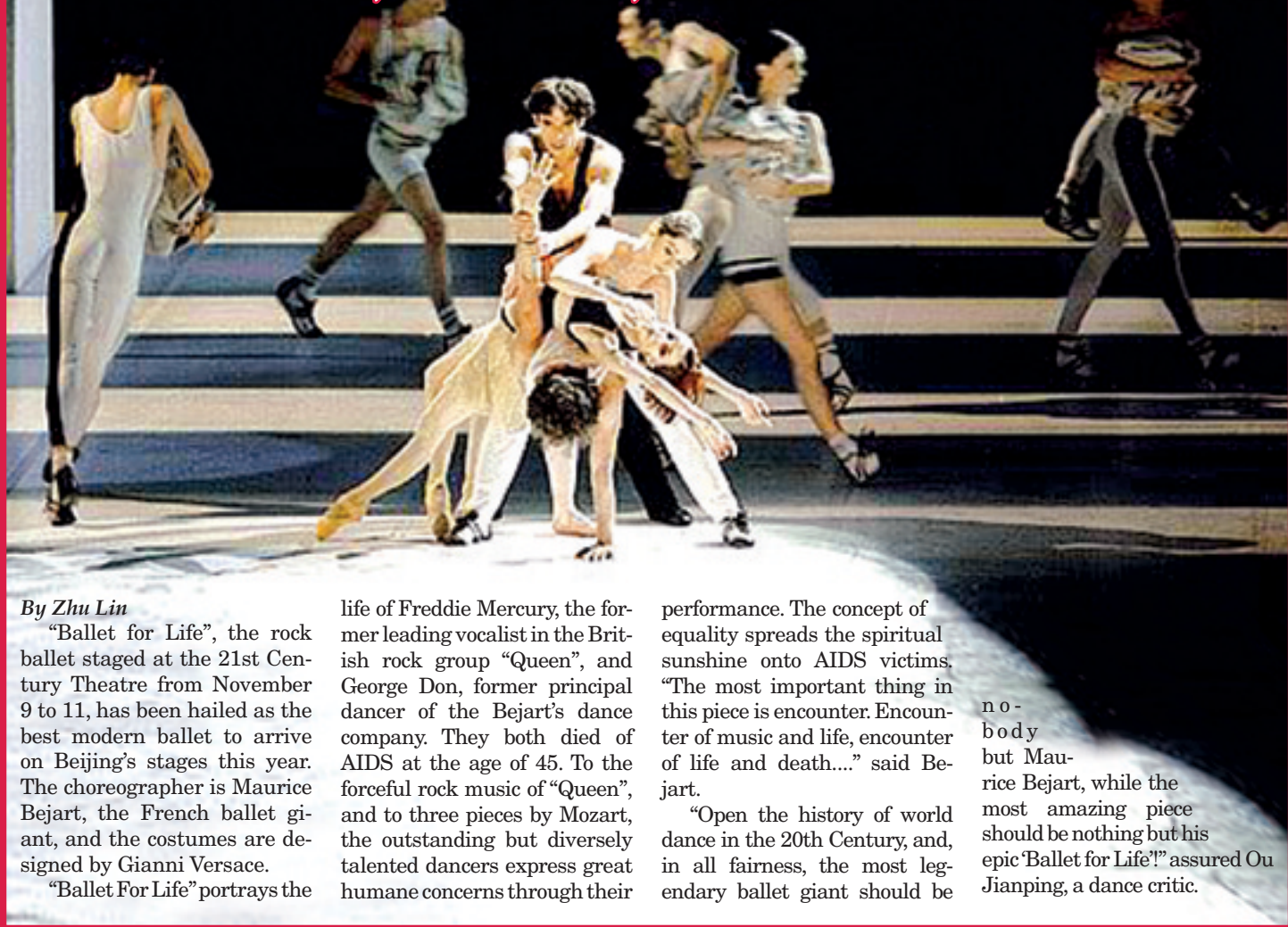
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"Ballet For Life"

Dance for Life and Death



By Zhu Lin

"Ballet for Life", the rock ballet staged at the 21st Century Theatre from November 9 to 11, has been hailed as the best modern ballet to arrive on Beijing's stages this year. The choreographer is Maurice Bejart, the French ballet giant, and the costumes are designed by Gianni Versace.

"Ballet For Life" portrays the

life of Freddie Mercury, the former leading vocalist in the British rock group "Queen", and George Don, former principal dancer of the Bejart's dance company. They both died of AIDS at the age of 45. To the forceful rock music of "Queen", and to three pieces by Mozart, the outstanding but diversely talented dancers express great humane concerns through their

performance. The concept of equality spreads the spiritual sunshine onto AIDS victims. "The most important thing in this piece is encounter. Encounter of music and life, encounter of life and death..." said Bejart.

"Open the history of world dance in the 20th Century, and, in all fairness, the most legendary ballet giant should be

nobody but Maurice Bejart, while the most amazing piece should be nothing but his epic 'Ballet for Life!'" assured Ou Jianping, a dance critic.

Catch Exotic Flavor in Pakistani Dance

By Zhao Pu

A 15-member Pakistani Arts troupe presented a fascinating 2-day performance at the Tianqiao Theatre on November 1 and 2, as part of the 4th Asia Arts Festival in Beijing. Their

programme included dances performed in religious rituals, celebrations and lively folk dance.

The troupe, known as the National Song and Dance Ensemble of Pakistan, was estab-

lished 40 years ago. They are currently undertaking a 15-day tour in China as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations of Sino-Pakistani diplomatic relations.

Photo by Zhuang Jian



Ancient Music Breathes New Life into Beijing Festival

By Miao Yajie

If evaluated by the box-office rate alone, the Dongjing Ceremonial Music, performed by Kunming Dongjing Ceremonial Music Ensemble on 31 October, was far from a success. However, as one of the only two Chinese classic concerts of the 4th Beijing Music Festival, the significance of the concert lies beyond the cold numbers of ticket sales. It is the first time for most music lovers to hear with their own ears music boasting 470 years of history.

Although it's difficult to follow due to the Kunming accent and way of chanting, the music deeply touched the audience with its solemn, imposing power.

Yunnan Dongjing music sprouted and formed in the mid-Ming Dynasty (1540-1570) in the Dali area in the west of the province. The performance was a condensed version of the folk Dongjing music. A big ensemble with 64 players and nearly 50 kinds of instruments fully displayed the main procedures of the ritual.

The climax of the concert occurred after the interval when members from the first Dongjing women's society appeared on stage. As the first women's Dongjing music society was established in the 1940's in Tonghai, 150 km from Kunming, the 18 girls were subject to intense pressure because only male in-

tellectuals could play the music for centuries. In order to found the Miaoshan Dongjing music society, all the 18 girls pledged never to marry. Now five of them are still living healthily, with the oldest 79 years of age, and the youngest 75. Two of them play the Suona horn, and the other three play gong chimes, the drum, and small gong respectively. All of them still perform actively back home. Long-time applause went to the five ladies for their excellent performance and contributions to Dongjing music.

More applause went to Wu Xueyuan, art director of the ensemble, who spent 2 years rearranging folk melodies with traditional Chinese orchestration theories for this concert.

However, some experts tended to agree that no matter how one inherits, preserves and carries forward Dongjing music, the priority should be to keep the original folk flavor of the music. Dongjing music on stage is great, but it has more or less lost its coarse, simple elements of the folk tradition.

Good or bad, provoking suggestions or criticisms, Dongjing music is no longer a strange word to many people, and on 31 October allowed the world to enjoy a taste of something different in music festivals in Beijing and other cities globally.



Photos by Zhang Hong

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Strong Tastes of "Xiang" Cuisine

Best Bites

By Jiao Pei

Different regions have their own special cuisines, as a result of different economic factors, geography, social customs and culture. The various cuisines of China are often described in terms of where they come from, hence the so-called "Eight Cuisines".

One of the eight is Hunanese style cooking, also called "Xiang" cuisine. Xiang cuisine is famous for its hot and spicy flavors. The favorite of Chairman Mao, who came from Hunan Province, Xiang cuisine is often referred to as "Family Mao's", and if you see a restaurant with a bust of Mao at the entrance, you can be pretty sure they have a Hunanese chef.



Xiangjun, a restaurant that opened at the end of August specializes in genuine Hunan cooking with reasonable prices. The restaurant covers two floors, with some private rooms on the second level. The menu includes dishes from all areas of Hunan province.

One of their specialties is venison, from a farm in Hengyang, Hunan Province. There are five venison dishes, and for the adventurous, a spirit made with deer's blood is available. Eating venison is very beneficial to one's health, according to traditional Chinese medicine, and every part of the deer serves some sort of medical function; improving weak health, regulating blood circulation, nourishing internal organs and so on.

Most non-venison dishes are 10-20 yuan, and the average price per head is 30-40 yuan. The restaurant is currently offering a special promotion, which includes five kinds of venison dishes, some seafood, two vegetable dishes, and six cold dishes. The cost is 1680 yuan for 10 persons (not including alcohol).

Add: Xibahe Zhongli, north of Chaoyang Department Store, Chaoyang District, go west from CIEC (国际展览中心), turn right at the Beijing Imperial Hotel, and walk for about 500 m, past the first intersection. **Open:** 11am-2pm, 4:30pm-9:30pm. **Tel:** 64639351.

Clavichord Cafe



Photos by Zhang Jizhou / Chen Shuyi

By Li Dan

The creaking of the wooden floor reminds you of the distant house of grandmother. Books about history, computers and fashion line the walls on wooden shelves. Musicians and music lovers sit cozily in the corners, and the scent of coffee drifts on the air.

Clavichord Cafe in COFCO Plaza is an atmospheric place for classical music fans. The cafe has two large rooms separated by a passageway. Along the window hang posters about fashion, movies and music. Through the window you can see lines of magazines, pamphlets and books lit by romantic candlelight. It is worth mentioning that all the chairs here are violin shaped and the color of coffee. When Canadian violinist Lara St. John was told she could take a violin chair home with her as a gift when she visited the cafe last August, she was like a happy kid choosing her favorite one.

In the other room, the shelves along the walls are filled with several thousand original edition CDs, all for sale, both traditional Chinese and western classical. The latest magazines are scattered around, while old and faded saddles lie beside the fireplace. Soft classical guitar music, elegant waitresses walking back and forth among tables, sweet-smelling coffee...

A salon of musicians, playwrights and artists meets once a week and an art exhibition is held once a month.

Add: No. 8, Jianguomennei Dajie, Dongcheng District, 1st floor, COFCO Plaza, bus 1, 4, 57, 24 or subway to Beijing-zhankou (北京站口).

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Reconstructed Panjiayuan Flea Market was unveiled this weekend and from this issue we'll resume our Panjiayuan Flea Market column.

The weekend market is divided into four areas now. Area A holds stalls for calligraphy and paintings, secondhand books, jadeite, crystal, agate and coral objects; area B is for folk artefacts, old coins - both Chinese and foreign, bamboo and bone sculptures, leather shadow puppets and Chinese opera masks; area C is for Buddhist relics, ethnic minority clothing and accessories, and area D, ceramics, copperware and other odds and ends.

Zhao's Mixed Media on Paper

By Li Dan

My friend Eddie recommended I visit a special painting stall newly set up in Panjiayuan Flea Market, specializing in mixed media on paper. It

is a young and modern form of art but here in Panjiayuan it combines creatively and effectively with traditional Chinese art.

Standing in front of Zhao Tianqi's stall, what impressed me first were the new and original paintings with blazing colors; portraits of Chairman Mao, Lady Yang (the highest-ranking imperial concubine of the Tang Dynasty), ancient maidservants and famous Peking Opera figures. "These are all my works!" said Zhao. According to her, the paintings merge various forms of art, such as etching, Chinese landscape, oil painting, calligraphy and seal carving. There are many creative ideas in Zhao's paintings, which depict Chairman Mao, a girl's long flying braid with a row of birds resting on it, a bald head with a bird, people dressed in Cultural Revolution style outfits without heads on their shoulders, or simply rubbings of ancient stone tablets.

"My husband is an artist who frequently holds exhibition in local galleries. With his help I'm now making 10-20 paintings each week and bring them here to sell." Zhao used to be an English teacher and is very fond of Chinese art and literature, "My paintings are all a combination of both Chinese traditional and western modern art. I love that way so much and my everyday inspiration comes from my customers, my surroundings and my beloved Chinese ancient books," she says.

Add: 9, row 4, area 3, Panjiayuan Flea Market. Price: most of the paintings are 40 x 50 square centimeters and sell for around 100 yuan each. **Open:** 9am-4:30pm, Sat & Sun. **Tel:** contact Zhao Tianqi, 13611311163 or 89595097(H).

Panjiayuan
潘
Flea Market

FLOWER BOXES AND WOODEN WINDOWS

By Jiao Pei

Shops specializing in ancient furniture can be found almost all over Beijing. Hand-wood is one such shop, situated near Ritan Park, in the embassy district.

About 40 square meters in size, Hand-wood opened in August last year. Every inch is used to display ancient furniture. The owner, Hu Zhihong, says all the furniture here has been collected from

local people both in the north and south of China. Most is from the Qing Dynasty, with a few pieces dating back as far as the Ming Dynasty. Shanxi province is famous for its solid wooden furniture, made mostly of elm, and sometimes walnut. The decorative patterns on the elm furniture are quite distinctive. Furniture from the southern China is more elegant than that from the north, though not as solid.

The most popular items are flower boxes and beautifully decorated wooden window frames. Prices for these range from 3,000 to 5,000 yuan, depending on the wood and the size (some have 4 leaves, some 6). Also many old cabinets from Shanxi Province are ideal for placing your TV on after some minor alterations. (The craftsmen endeavor to retain the character of the pieces as much as possible).

Mrs. Hu also has another shop, Fo Yuan Ge, in Beijing Curio City, which specializes in jade articles.

Hand-wood (函得屋) **Add:** 1 Ritan Beilu, Chaoyang District. **Open:** 9:30am-8pm.

Tel: 65945675. Fo Yuan Ge () **Add:** 25, 2F, Beijing Curio City, west of Huawei Bridge, Chaoyang District. **Open:** you'd better phone before you go. **Tel:** 67735993.

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Buying a pre-loved apartment in Beijing

By Wang Dandan

The fact that foreign residents can now buy houses and apartments in Beijing has been well publicized, however most of that publicity has been directed towards the purchase of new homes. According to Chen Tongshun, director of the Market Department of Beijing Real Estate Trading Center, foreigners are also permitted to buy second-hand houses. The procedure is quite simple, providing it is foreigner approved and the owner has all the legal certification.

The procedure is as follows:

First, both sides have to negotiate a legal contract, which must be registered at the Beijing Real Estate Exchange. When doing this, the owner should also show his or her ID card, Property Right Certificate, the Right



of Use of State-Owned Land and the contract with the developers of the house or apartment project. The purchaser must present their ID card or passport.

The next step is to wait for the exchange to grant approval to the transaction.

When it comes to the payment stage, a procedural fee is charged according to the area of the house. For less than 120 square meters, the charge is 500 yuan for each side; for an area over 120 square meters, the charge is 5,000 yuan each.

The payment of the procedural fee must be in RMB, but there is no restriction on the currency used to purchase the house.

Contracts can be registered at the exchange on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 9:00am to 5:00 pm.

Tel: 67013314



Purchasing trap contract

By Wang Dandan

After checking the house, but before signing the final contract, you need to sign a purchase agreement with the developers.

Trap one: Reasons for rejecting the house and the results of such rejection not clearly stated in the agreement.

When you sign the purchase agreement, you have to pay a certain amount of deposit. However, if you then fail to get a bank loan, developers usually only return the amount you paid initially, but not the deposit. The reason they give is that you broke the contract, so they are entitled to keep the deposit.

Countermeasure: Include in the agreement that if you fail to secure a bank loan, all monies, including the deposit should be returned, deducting a specified amount for procedural fees.

Trap two: "the shortest time" and "the best"

Developers often promise that problems will be solved in "the shortest time", or that the imported decoration materials are "the best in the world". Such words sound good but carry no legal weight. Such terms written in your contract will spell trouble if you need to take legal action.

Countermeasure: Make sure your contract specifies actual times, places, materials and all the verbal promises the developer or sales agent has made to you.

Trap three: developers terminate the contract

Such items are usually included in the contract: if the purchaser fails to pay the remaining payment even after serious warning from developers, the developer may terminate the contract and withhold all the paid money. This is illegal. If the purchaser has already paid 95%, and only 5% remains, the developer certainly has no right to confiscate the property and withhold the money.

Countermeasure: According to the law, such an item in the contract is invalid, and should be excluded.

Trap four: Compensation not defined for developer's broken promises.

Contracts often state that "x will be solved before y year / month / day", without mentioning what recourse the purchaser can take if "x" is not solved by the promised date.

Countermeasure: Ensure that such compensation is defined in the contract in as much detail as possible.

Office prices

Beijing Capital Times Square:

Rent: US\$20-35/month/sqm

Location: West Chang'an Avenue; south-east corner of Xidan Intersection. Underground parking lot available.

Beijing East Ocean Centre:

Rent: US\$29.5/month/sqm

Location: Jianguomennei Dajie; between Scitech Tower and New Otani Chang Fu Gong Hotel. Underground parking lot available.

Beijing International Club:

Rent: US\$30/month/sqm

Location: Jianguomenwai Dajie; at the corner of Ritan Road.

Beijing Oriental Plaza:

Rent: US\$34/month/sqm

Location: Wangfujing Dajie; at the corner of the East Chang'an Avenue and the Wangfujing Street.

Beijing Sun Flower Tower:

Rent: US\$45/month/sqm(net)

Location: Liangmaqiao Road; opposite to Lufthansa Center. Underground parking lot available.

Bright China Chang An Building:

Rent: US\$30/month/sqm

Location: 7 Jianguomennei Dajie. Underground parking lot available.

Business Building of Jingguang Center:

Rent: US\$30/month/sqm

Location: Chaoyang Road; at the corner of the East Third-Ring Road. Underground parking lot available.

Canway Building:

Rent: US\$32/month/sqm

Location: Fuxingmenwai Dajie; at the corner of Fuxingmenwai Street and Nanlishilu.

Chang An Club:

Rent: US\$26/month/sqm

Location: West Chang'an Avenue; next to the Beijing Hotel. Underground parking lot available.

China World Trade Center (Tower I):

Rent: US\$56/month/sqm(net)

Location: Jianguomenwai Dajie; at the corner of east Third Ring Road.

China World Trade Center (Tower II):

Rent: US\$61/month/sqm(net)

Location: Guanghua Road; at the corner of Guanghua Road and East 3rd Ring Road.

Full Link Plaza:

Rent: US\$27-28/month/sqm

Location: Chaoyangmenwai Dajie; at the corner of East 2nd Ring Road and Chaoyangmenwai Dajie. Underground parking lot available.

Gateway Building:

Rent: US\$22.4/month/sqm

Location: Yabao road; between east Second Ring Road and Ritan Road. Close to many foreign embassies.

Huabin International Building:

Rent: US\$26.5-28.5/month/sqm

Location: East Chang'an Avenue; opposite Guiyou Shopping Center.

Kerry Center:

Rent: US\$42-45/month/sqm

Location: Guanghua Road; at the corner of Guanghua Road and east Third Ring Road.

The above information is for reference only. DTZ Debenham Tie Leung provides the above information. For further information, please go to www.dtz.com

www.dtz.bj.cn

Email: residential@dtz.bj.cn



No property rights 12,000 USD lost

By Wang Dandan/ Yan Ming

It is common for foreign companies to rent houses, apartments, villas and offices in Beijing. However, one needs to be aware that in the course of renting, there are many ways in which an unscrupulous house owner can cheat an unsuspecting potential lessee.

X Company rents a villa in Beijing. The price is by no means cheap, about US\$6,000 per month, including a one-month deposit to cover IDD or other expenses. The rent is to be paid monthly, according to the contract. Everything is satisfactory; the housing project is among the best in Beijing. There is no problem with the living conditions. But the manager of X Company cannot park his car in the public area in the villa district. The reason is simple; the lessor did not pay the appropriate property management charge. The charge in villas is divided into different stages: 1.8, 2.5, 3 and 6 yuan per square meter per day. In this instance, the lessor paid the lowest

one, which does not include the parking lot fee.

When the company asked the lessor to increase the payment to get the parking lot space. The lessor refused to do so. Eventually, the company sued the lessor, only to discover that the lessor is not the legal owner of the house! Consequently, the court rejected the suit, because it does not recognize the rental contract as a legal one.

The reason is that the lessor is still in the process of paying off the villa, and so does not have the property right certificate. So he has no property right certificate. According to the Beijing Renting Regulations, without a property right certificate, a house cannot be rented at all!

The company had no legal recourse, and was obliged to hastily arrange alternative accommodation for the manager. Furthermore, it was unable to recover the one-month rent, or deposit. The company had to learn from the experience, at a cost of \$12,000!



Target: Beijing Gloria Plaza Hotel
When: 18:30-19:50, Sunday, November 4th
Hotel Detective: Wang Dandan

Thomas Anderson, Germany

I prefer to live in chain hotels. I have been living in this brand for years and am already familiar with its decoration. It is very home-like. When you arrive in a fresh place, most of us I suppose would choose to be close to something familiar. I like its external and internal decorations, as it is all the same over the world.

Cindy Teethon, America

I am an immigrant to America and I was born in France. I like a romantic environment. Just tell you one detail why I live here. The lights in the room are very beautiful. And the curtains, the color of the curtain matches with the light in the room. It is the room where I stay for most of the time. As for lobby lounge and so on, I do not care at all. And I never dine in



the hotel. It is very expensive.

Tong Kuo, Taiwan

I do not want to live in the four-star hotel at all but I have to. I am a businessman and if I live in a small place, my business partner would not even talk to me. Isn't it strange? But it is the fact. And I book the hotel in Taiwan, when I arrived here, they picked me up at the airport.

Renting in the north

North Second Ring Road

By Wang Dandan

Today, we look at apartment prices around the north Second Ring Road, from Xizhimen in the west to Dongzhimen in the east.

Xizhimen Qiao to Jishuitan Qiao

Prices around here range from about 1,600 yuan for a simply decorated, fully furnished one-room apartment to 1,900 yuan for a two room and 2,200 yuan for a three room apartment. More elaborately decorated apartments might cost between 1,800 and 2,000 yuan for one room, and up to 2,600 yuan for two rooms.

The newly widened and improved Xiwai Dajie has eased the flow of traffic considerably. However, if you ride a bicycle, the road signs can be a little confusing! In case of fire, the City Fire Brigade Center is nearby, as is the Beijing Zoo, for entertainment, and a Pizza Hut.

Jishuitan Qiao to Deshengqiao

A simply decorated, fully furnished one room apartment costs around 1,500 yuan, two room, 1,700 yuan and three room 2,100 to 2,400 yuan. Better quality apartments cost 1,800 yuan (one room) and 2,200 yuan (two rooms).

Xinjiekou Dajie, one of the main roads near Jishuitan Qiao, is the scene of a perpetual traffic jam, however the subway provides an alternative. One recommended restaurant is Laogufeng Noodle, in the south-east corner of Xinjiekou Huokou. The prices are not high, and always smells delicious.

Jishuitan Qiao to Gulou Qiao

The average price for one room with simple decoration and full facilities is 1,400 yuan, two room 1,600 yuan and three room 1,800 yuan.

Compared with other places in the north Third Ring Road, the prices here are low. There are some hutongs around providing a bit of an atmosphere of old Beijing. And the wonderful Drum Tower is not far away.

Gulou Qiao to Andingmen Qiao

A one room apartment costs around 1,500 yuan, two room 1,900 yuan and three room 2,400 yuan. More elaborately decorated apartments might cost between 1,700 and 1,900 yuan for one room, and up to 2,400 yuan for two rooms.

Andingmen Hospital is nearby for any emergencies. The Capital Library and Capital Museum are located in this area as well. The Temple of Earth Park is not far away.

Andingmen Qiao to Dongzhimen Qiao

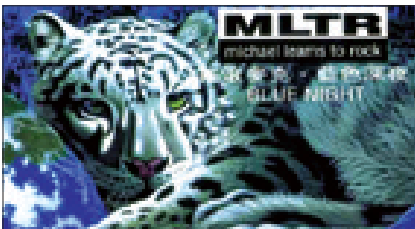
The average price for one room with simple decoration and full facilities is 1,600 yuan, two room 1,900 yuan and three room 2,200 yuan.

"HOUSING" welcomes your feedback: What kind of difficulties do you encounter when looking for housing in Beijing? What kind of information do you need? What can we help you with? Our E-mail: housing@ynet.com
Tel: 65902522 Fax: 65902525

Music

Blue Night - Michael Learns to Rock.

MLTR has been described as a meeting of Scandinavian light and the classic international pop song that throughout the years has been refined by artists such as the Beatles, Eagles, Elton John and Billy Joel. They've also been described as a great mime act. **Where:** Beijing Workers' Stadium, west of Sanlitun, Chaoyang District. **When:** Nov. 11, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 60-320 yuan, 480 yuan VIP. **Tel:** 68347116, 68324206.

**European Union Baroque Orchestra**

EUBO was founded in 1985 to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the birth of three of the greatest baroque composers: J S Bach, Scarlatti and Handel. Talented young musicians from all over Europe, using original or replicas of 18th century instruments, will provide a real taste of the "fruits of the baroque". Program includes the classical work of Bach, Vivaldi and Handel. **Conductor:** Alfredo Bernardini. **Where:** Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Beixinhuajie, Liubukou (六部口). **When:** Nov. 10, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 30-180 yuan. **Tel:** 66057006.



fredo Bernardini. **Leader:** Nicolas Mazzoleni; **Purcell:** Music for the Theatre Vivaldi: Concerto for strings in A major; **Handel:** The Arrival of Queen of Sheba **Corelli:** Concerto Grosso in C minor Op. 6 No. 3; **Bach:** Overture in C Major. **Where:** Beijing Concert Hall. **When:** Nov. 13, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 50-280 yuan. **Tel:** 64636572, 64636628.

**The Awards Concert of the Billboard Original Chinese Songs 2001**

Singers from China's mainland, Hong Kong and Macao. **Where:** Beijing Workers' Stadium, west of Sanlitun, Chaoyang District. **When:** Nov. 10, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 200-680 yuan, 1,000 yuan box. **Tel:** 65016655.

Erhu by Liu Guangyu

Performed by Central Opera Symphony Orchestra, conductor: Gao Weichun. **Where:** Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Beixinhuajie, Liubukou (六部口). **When:** Nov. 10, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 30-180 yuan. **Tel:** 66057006.

Drum & Qu Concert

By Zhong Yujie. **Where:** Chang'an Grand Theater (长安大戏院), 7 Jianguomennei Dajie. **When:** Nov. 15-18, 7:30pm. **Tel:** 65101309/10.

Musica Vitae Chamber Orchestra from Sweden

Conductor / Violin: Peter Csaba. **Piano:** Bengt-Ake Lundin **Ingvar Lidholm:** Music for strings F. Liszt: Malediction for piano and strings J. Sibelius: Romance A. Dvorak: Serenade in E major Op. 22. **Where:** Beijing Concert Hall. **When:** Nov. 9, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 30-200 yuan. **Tel:** 66057006.

**Rock'n' Roll at the Flamingo**

Bands: Convenient Shop, Cotton Clothes, PK14, Happy Street, etc. **Where:** Flamingo Bar (火烈鸟酒吧), 8 Gongti Beilu, opposite Zhaolong Hotel, Chaoyang District. **When:** Nov. 17, 9:30pm. **Admission:** 20 yuan. **Tel:** 65324053.

New Music Power & Mn Record Music

Bands: Purple Loop, Multi-elements, Red Flag, etc. **Where:** Get lucky (豪运酒吧), Taiyangonglu, east of the south gate of Duiwai Jiangmao (经贸大学). **When:** Nov. 9 and 10, 9pm. **Admission:** 30 yuan, 20 yuan student. **Tel:** 64299109.

2001 International Jazz Festival



Annual jazz feast since 1993, this year altogether seven bands will participate. Nov. 16, Golden Angel (China), Xia Jia Trio (China), Dianne Reeves (USA); Nov. 17, Lennart Abberg Trio (Sweden), Rabih Abou-Khalil (Lebanon); Nov. 18, Moreno Donadel Trio (Italy/Japan/China), Vital Information (USA), featuring Steve Smith, Tom Coster, Baren Brown and Frank Gamble.



Where: 21st Century Theater, 40 Liangmaqiaolu, 1km east of the Kempinski Hotel. **When:** Nov. 16-18, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 50 (student), 100-400 yuan, 800 yuan VIP. **Tel:** 85275813, 86063618 - Culture Dept.

Exhibitions

**American Impression-Wash & Ink Exhibition**

Sylvia Miller from California expresses the sceneries of modern cities in America. The colors are bright and very fashionable. **Where:** Wan Fung Art Gallery (云峰画廊), 136 Nanchizi Dajie, Dongcheng District. **When:** till Nov. 15, 9am-5pm. **Admission:** free. **Tel:** 65233320.

Li Taimo's Works

Where: Beijing International Art Gallery, 48 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District. **When:** till Nov. 13, 9am-5pm. **Admission:** free. **Tel:** 65133388-1208.

Xi Zhinong's Wildlife Photos

Photos by Xi Zhinong, winner of the 2001 Gerald Durrell award of BG Wildlife Photographer, organized by BBC Wildlife Magazine and The British Natural History Museum, sponsored by BG Group. **Where:** Public Photo Gallery (大众影廊), Joint Publishing Bookstore, Dongs, Dongcheng District, bus 102, 104, 108 to Meishuguan. **When:** till Nov. 14. **Admission:** free. **Tel:** 65279098.

**Oil Painting Show**

Artist Liu Yihua (刘亦华) combines synthetic material with traditional oil painting, focusing on decoration.

Where: Lin Feng Art Studio (林风工作室), Tongzhou Yuqiao Beili (玉桥北里), bus 372 to Yuqiaobeili. **When:** till Nov. 15, 10am-8pm. **Tel:** 81584553



Religious

Beijing International Christian Fellowship

A multicultural gathering for foreign passport holders, comprises of people from 60 countries. Services begin at 9am and 11am every Sunday. Bible classes for children and adults. Nursery provided. Please bring a photo ID that proves foreign citizenship. **Where:** 21st Century Theater, 40 Liangmaqiaolu, 1km east of the Kempinski Hotel. **When:** Sunday, 9am, 11am. **Web:** www.bicf.com.cn

The Church of the Good Shepherd

An international, English-speaking, Christian church. Every Sunday at 10am, also classes for children and young adults are provided during the services. **Where:** the Capital Club Athletics Center, Capital Mansion complex. **When:** Sunday, 10am. **Tel:** 64386536.

"The River" - River of Grace Church

A new English speaking church in Beijing, the River invites expatriates from everywhere. Fresh Wind Meeting - first series of special meetings as a new church in Beijing. Rev. Bill Carruthers from Canada will join this. He is an itinerant Bible teacher and historical Revivalist. **Schedule:** Healing Service, Nov. 9, 7pm; On Sunday morning, Nov. 11, 10am (Child care provided); Sunday Afternoon, Nov. 11, 2pm (Child care provided). **Where:** Yong An Hotel, south Annex Building 4, 2F, turn east from the Dongsanhuanlu by the wall of the Great Wall Sheraton Hotel, to the first lights, you can see the Yong An Hotel on your right, just west of the German Food Center. **When:** Sunday, 10am. **Tel:** 13911257602.

Weather

Friday November 9

Clear to overcast, Max: 13C. Min: 1C.

**Saturday November 10**

Clear to overcast, sleet Max: 9C. Min: 4C.

**Sunday November 11**

Overcast, showers, high winds Max: 6C. Min: -3C.

**Monday November 12**

Clear Max: 7C. Min: -5C.

**Tuesday November 13**

Clear to cloudy Max: 8C. Min: -2C.

**Wednesday November 14**

Clear to cloudy Max: 10C. Min: 0C.

**Thursday November 15**

Clear to cloudy Max: 10C. Min: 0C.



We are glad to receive your feedback. If you need any help in your life, you can email us at bjtodayinfo@ynet.com or call 65902522

By Priscilla / Lydia

Performances

Swan Lake

Performed by Russia's renowned Bolshoi Ballet, which is the first one to perform Swan Lake in public. **Where:** Beijing Exhibition Center Theater (北展剧场), 135 Xizhimenwai Dajie. **When:** Nov. 15-18, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 120-800 yuan, 980 yuan VIP. **Tel:** 64068888, 64069999. **Chinese Comedy "Tuo'er" (The Cheat)** Starring famous comedy actors, Chen Peisi, Zhu Shimao, etc. **Where:** Beijing Chang'an Grand Theater, 7 Jianguomennei Dajie. **When:** Nov. 11-17, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 80-280 yuan. **Tel:** 65101309/10. **Latin and American Song & Dance** Performed by Light Music Troupe of



China Song & Dance Troupe. **Where:** National Library Concert Hall, 33 Zhongguancun Nandajie, Haidian District. **When:** Nov. 10, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 30-180 yuan. **Tel:** 68485462.

Force of Habit

Thomas Bernhard is one of Austria's foremost writers. The play is a touching comedy. It is the first time for one of his works to be performed in China. **Director:** Cao Kefei. **Where:** China Children's Theater (中国儿童剧院). **When:** till Nov. 20. **Admission:** 30 yuan (student)-150 yuan. **Tel:** 66037019/65241831.

Movies

**Cherry Lane Movies**

Chinese movie with English subtitles. **Spicy Love Soup (爱情麻辣烫)**, Directed by Zhang Yang, starring Xiao Bin, Xu Fan, Pu Cunxin, produced in 1998, 110 minutes. This is a humorous, intimate portrait of five couples in modern-day Beijing and how they cope with love. Each of the lead actors and actresses in the cast has won Golden Rooster Awards for Best Actor/ Actress or Best Supporting Actor/ Actress. **Where:** Cherry Lane Movies, Sino-Japanese Youth Exchange Center, Intl. Conference Hall, 40 Liangmaqiaolu, 1km east of the Kempinski Hotel. **When:** Nov. 16, 8pm. **Admission:** 50 yuan. **Tel:** 64615318/9.

Italian Movie

The Sunflower, directed by Vittorio De Sica, starring Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni, and Chinese movie,

This Summer, directed by Li Yu. **Where:** Space for Imagination Coffee Shop (原盒子咖啡屋), 5 Xiwangzhuang Xiaoku, opposite Tsinghua Tongfang Mansion, bus 375 to east gate of Tsinghua University, bus 355 to Shuangqinglu. **When:** Nov. 10, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 5 yuan. **Tel:** 62791280.

Korean Movie

Joint Security Area (共同警备区) Directed by Park Chan Wuk, produced by Myung Film, starring Li Ying'ai, Lee Byung Hun. **Where:** 5F, Hyundi Millennium Tower (现代盛世大厦), 38 Xiaoyunlu, Chaoyang District. **When:** Nov. 16, 5:30pm. **Tel:** 84538112/3.

**Tomb Raider**

USA, 2001. Starring Angelina Jolie, Jon Voight, Danniell Craig. **Director:** Simon West. Adopted from the popular computer game. Cinemas around Beijing.

Food

Sri Lankan Food Festival

Master Chef Pubilis offers Sir Lankan dishes in their natural flavor, "Prawn Theldala", "Thora Malu Kirata". Daily dinner buffet is priced at 175 yuan plus 15% surcharge. **Where:** The Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing (长城饭店), Dongsanhuanlu, Liangmahe, Chaoyang District. **When:** till Nov. 11. **Tel:** 65905566-2117, 65905888.

till Nov. 11. **Tel:** 65905566-2117, 65905888.

Lobster Promotion

Atrium Cafe in Gloria Hotel is serving lobsters fresh from their fish tank. Lobster bisque for 38 yuan and lobster cocktail with avocado for 128 yuan. **Where:** Atrium Cafe. **When:** till Nov. 15. **Tel:** 43628855 ext 2614.

Activities

Reciting Germany Literature Works

Works by Katja Lange-Muller, Nov. 9, 6:30pm; Thomas Brussig, Nov. 10, 6:30pm; Burkhard Spinnen, Nov. 12, 6:30pm. **Where:** Goethe Institute (歌德学院), west end of Weigongcunlu, opposite south gate of Beijing University of Science & Technology. **Tel:** 68417891.

Chinese Culture Club

To learn Chinese Tradition and ancient Medicine. Visit a traditional Chinese hospital and listen to a lecture by a senior doctor on pulse diagnosis based on ancient Chinese medicine. English narration. **Where:** 23, Qianmen Dongjie, Yanhuang Hospital, southeast side of Tian'anmen Square, opposite McDonald's. (There are two white

stone lions in front of the hospital gate. **When:** Nov 11, Sunday, 2:30-5pm. **Fee:** free.

Chinese Table Talk

Chat with Chinese friends and teachers around two tables. One table for beginners and the other for intermediate level. Learn to read and write some Chinese, and also some street talks, comic stories and Chinese songs, etc. **Where:** Library Bar, 1F, Tower B, East Gate Plaza (东环广场), right behind the Poly Plaza on the East Second Ring Road. (Opposite Baskin & Robbins.) **When:** every Tuesday, 7pm-9pm. **Fee:** 66 yuan / per week. **Tel:** contact Feng Cheng at 8462-2081/1350-103-5145. **Email:** chinese_cultureclub@hotmail.com **Web:** www.chinesecultureclub.org

Western Qing Tombs

Cultural Tour

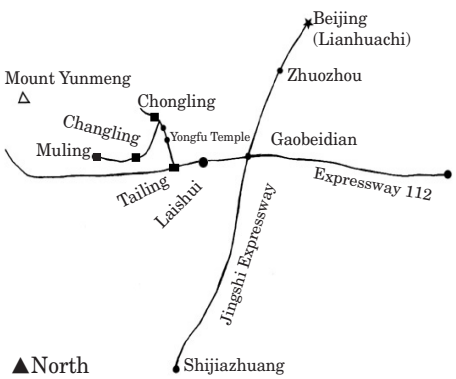
For many visitors to China, an afternoon at the Ming Tombs in the countryside near Beijing is a must. However while this may be the highest profile group of tombs in China, it is by no means the only one. Four emperors of the Qing Dynasty built their tombs in Yixian, Hebei; the province that surrounds Beijing.

The Qing Dynasty reigned for 295 years. Ten Qing emperors ruled China from 1616 until 1911. Emperor Yongzheng (雍正) was the first to have his tomb built at Yixian, with construction beginning in 1730. Emperors Jiaqing (嘉庆), Daoguang (道光) and Guangxu (光绪) followed suit.

These tombs are known as the Western Qing Tombs (清西陵), while the Qing Tombs located in Zunhua (遵化), Hebei Province are called the Eastern Qing Tombs (清东陵).



Photos by Su Yan



Picture by Jiang Zhong

By Jiang Zhong

Tailing (泰陵), the tomb of Emperor Yongzheng, is the largest and grandest of the Western Qing Tombs. Yongzheng was the third emperor of the Qing Dynasty. Completed in 1737, the tomb took seven years to construct and covers an area of 8.47 hectares. Five-arch Stone Bridge is the first structure one encounters on entering Tailing. To the north of the bridge are three high archways, standing on the wide square in front of Red Gate. The archways were constructed entirely without nails.

The Red Gate is the main entrance to the Western Qing Tombs. To the



Drainage system of Tailing

north of the gate is the stele pavilion built by Qianlong for his father. The two stone tablets in the pavilion bear inscriptions praising the deeds of Yongzheng in Manchu and Han languages.

Statues of civil officials, generals, horses, elephants and lions stand in pairs on either side of the road, similar to the sacred way at the Ming Tombs.

Beyond a dragon and phoenix gate and two three-arch bridges, is the palace area. The first structure one encounters is a pavilion housing a stele. The stele bears the emperor's honorary title in Manchu, Han and Mongolian. On the east of the pavilion is a small courtyard with an adjoining kitchen, warehouse and slaughterhouse where preparations for sacrifices were made. Ceremonial tablets were placed in the eastern side hall, and in the western side hall, lamas chanted the scriptures. The room at the center of this area is where ancestral tablets of the emperor and empress were placed on a bed with pillows and quilts. Long'en Hall, the largest building in the area, was the main site for ceremonies. Ceremonies were held to mark the five major festivals of the lunar year. Behind Long'en Gate is the entrance to the burial chamber. The highest building in the tomb area houses the tomb of Yongzheng.

Muling (慕陵) is the tomb of Emperor Daoguang and three empresses. Construction of this tomb started in 1831 and was finished in 1836.

Precious nanmu wood was used extensively in the construction of

Muling Tomb's Long'en Hall and its two side halls. Neither the interior nor the exterior of the halls are painted; instead, the natural color of nanmu wood is maintained. On the ceiling and decorated brackets of the three halls, more than a thousand flying, rampant and coiling dragons are carved.

Behind the Long'en Hall is a ditch and three stone bridges. Stone archway and stone balustrades replace the traditional glazed door. There is no memorial tower as at Tailing Tomb, nor a stele pavilion. The reason for this was that when the Emperor Daoguang was in power, the national economy was weak. As a cost-cutting measure, he issued an imperial edict to cancel the construction of the stele pavilion.

Changling (昌陵) is the tomb of Emperor Jiaqing. It is located one kilometer west of Tailing Tomb, and was constructed between 1796 and 1803.

The scale and style of Changling Tomb resembles that of Tailing Tomb. However the floor of the Long'en Hall is covered with precious purple marble. The patterns of the floor are in the forms of bamboo shoots, silkworm cocoons, lotuses and baubles. When the sun shines, it seems that the floor is covered with jewels. The Stele Pavilion, Long'en Gate and Long'en hall are bigger and grander than those of Tailing.

Chongling (崇陵) was the last imperial tomb to be constructed in China. It was the tomb of the Emperor Guangxu

and Empress Xiaodingjing. Construction began in 1909 and it was completed in 1915. The Long'en Hall is built of hard wood, and local people give it the nickname of 'copper beam and iron column'. The four columns inside are gilded with silver and gold, a unique character among the Qing Tombs. The fourteen water holes inside the underground palace are connected with a ditch; designed to drain water from the underground palace.

Where: Yixian (易县), Hebei Province

How to get there:

By car: take the Jingshi Expressway (京石高速), then change to Expressway 112; the trip should take about two hours.

By train: the Imperial Railway (皇家铁路号) from the West Railway Station will take you there; the train departs Beijing at 7:20 am daily, and leaves Yixian for Beijing at 5:30 pm. The trip takes about 2 hours.

Other attractions in this area: Yongfu Temple and ancient pine trees

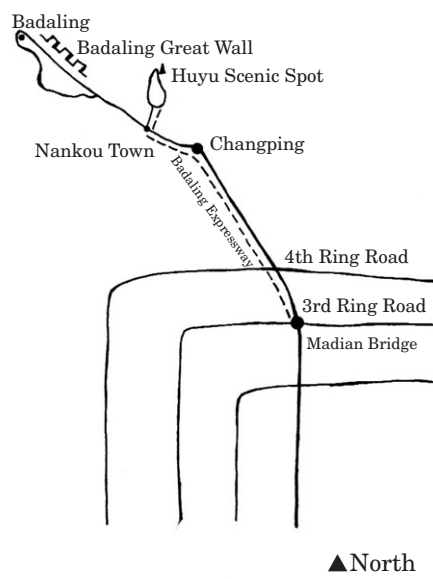
Admittance: 25 yuan for Tailing, 25 yuan for Changling, 10 yuan for Muling, 25 yuan for Chongling, 10 yuan for Yongfu Temple

Accommodation: Tourists can stay in the Temporary Palace Hotel (行宫宾馆), built in 1748 for the Qing emperors and empresses.

Address: Lianggezhuang, Yixian, Hebei Province Tel: 0312-4710038

Scenic spots around the tombs: Mount Yunmeng five kilometers northwest, Dragon Lake (龙湖) one kilometer from Chongling and South Lake (南湖) 10 kilometers west

Outdoor Actions



Picture by Jiang Zhong

Bicycle to Huyu

By Jiang Zhong

Huyu (虎峪) Scenic Spot features a 12-kilometer-long valley, steep mountains, waterfalls, caves and beautiful waters. Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty officially designated the area as a scenic spot, giving it the title Brilliant Huyu (虎峪辉金) in honor of its magnificent scenery. Baixiandong (One-hundred-god Cave) is one of the famous attractions in the scenic spot. Clouds usually hide the entrance to the cave, which houses statues of gods worshipped by Buddhists, Taoists and followers of Confucianism.

Huyu is ideal for rock climbing, boating, fishing and bicycling. Beijing's ORE Bicycle Club is planning a cycle tour to the scenic spot Sunday week. If you are interested in participating, you should contact the club right now. The tour will cover about 45 kilometers, part of the route features smooth mountain road with a gentle slope.

Where: Huyu Village (虎峪村), Changpingnankou (昌平南口); 12 kilometers from the county town, 8 kilometers from the Ming Tombs

Admittance: 40 yuan for all the sightseeing spots and attractions; rock climbing 30 yuan

How to get there:

By bus: Bus 345 from Deshengmen to Changping, then bus 357 or 376 to Hongnigou (红泥沟), finally walk northward for 3 kilometers

By car: Take the Badaling Expressway to the Chenzhuang (陈庄) exit, drive north for three kilometers;

Cycling tour itinerary:

Assembly hour: 7:30am, November 18, 2001

Assembly place: Madian Bridge (马甸桥)

Route details: Madian Bridge-Changping-Badaling Expressway side road-Huyu

Charge: 45 yuan (includes two meals, beverage, amusement)

Contact: ORE Bicycle Club;

Gongzhufen (公主坟): 63953687, 63957778, 66961988

By Jiang Zhong

Hongcun Village (宏村) lies in Yi County, Anhui Province. It was included in the world heritage list in 1999. The village came into being 800 years ago. The isolation of the village has sheltered it from many of the changes that have swept through the country, with the result that much of its ancient architecture has been preserved.

It is particularly picturesque at this time of year. When the white walls and gray tiles of the ancient buildings set against the red and yellow autumn foliage, it creates the impression as if it were virtually a traditional Chinese landscape painting.

Nanhu and Yuezhaoh lakes, the two lakes of Hongcun Village, are the themes of numerous classical poems. Yuezhaoh Lake is shaped like a crescent moon. The reflection of the blue sky, green mountains, red leaves and ancient buildings in the mirror-like surface of the lake is an unforgettable sight.

The village is said to be shaped like an ox, accounting

for its other name, Village of Ox Shape. Leigang Hill is the head of the ox, the old ginkgo and white poplar at the entrance to the village the horns, the main group of buildings are the body, the winding canal the gut, the two lakes the stomach and the four bridges the legs. The ancient residents regarded the ox with such admiration, they imitated its shape in the layout of their village.

Hongcun Village also boasts a well designed water supply system, which always ensured sufficient water for daily use, as well as for fighting fires, when necessary. In ancient times, villagers drew their water for drinking before eight in the morning. Only after eight o'clock was the canal used for washing.

The 60-room Chengzhi Hall (承志堂) is one of the most important buildings in the village. The whole complex includes an outer yard and inner yard, various halls and

A Real Life Chinese painting

Chinawide



Wood carving on an old door

studies, stables, an amusement room for playing mah-jong and an opium den. The room of the master's daughter was located on the second floor of the front hall. It was well lit by the sun, so she could do embroidery and put on her makeup. From a hatch in the balcony, the daughter could see into the hall beneath. When she reached the age of marriage, potential suitors were invited to the hall and she observed them through the hatch, choosing her future husband from among them.

Including Chengzhi Hall, there are a total of 137 ancient complexes preserved in Hongcun Village. Large and small, splendid and humble, each one features its own, individual layout and design. Hongcun Village is only 60 kilometers from Huangshan (Yellow Mountain), and 50 kilometers from another local attraction, Xidi Village (西递), which along with Hongcun Village, was included in the

world heritage list in 1999.

Where: Yi County (黟县), Anhui Province (安徽省)

How to get there: train T45 from Beijing to Fuzhou (福州) stops at Huangshan (黄山); the journey takes 20 and a half hours, costs 182 yuan for hard seat and 330 yuan for hard sleeper. The train departs Beijing at 9:20 am daily, and arrives at Huangshan at 12:32 am.

After a little sightseeing around Huangshan, you can hire a car to Hongcun Village (2 hours, 50 yuan).

Alternatively, Eastern Airlines flight MU5168 from Beijing to Huangshan takes two hours and costs 990 yuan; there are daily flights from Beijing departing at 9:40am. Flight MU5167 for Beijing leaves Huangshan at either 4:20pm or 5:25pm.

Admittance to Hongcun Village (the ticket office is at the entrance to the village): 30 yuan

Accommodation: you can stay in the old houses, 30-50 yuan per night.

Contact: 0559-5541031 (no English service)